Sept. 16, 1991

THE NEW YORKER

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“When you love what you’re doing as much as I do, it doesn’t feel like work.” *Plácido Domingo*

Wherever he travels, Plácido Domingo carries a series of green bound books into which he writes his engagements up to three years in advance. Such are the demands the opera world makes on one of its most sought-after performers.

His ability to thrill an audience is such that a legendary curtain call in Vienna lasted over an hour. ‘‘It would have been easier,’’ Plácido said, ‘‘to sing the opera all over again.’’

Domingo has committed nearly a hundred operatic roles to memory. He believes this daunting repertoire is necessary to attract the widest possible audience because his ambition is to help more people, all over the world, enjoy the music he loves.

More than a singer, Domingo is also a respected conductor. “The operatic conductor is like a Roman charioteer,” he says. “He has a hundred horses on stage and a hundred horses in the pit. And he has to control them all.”

Throughout his career, Domingo has held himself to the highest standards of performance. It’s the same measure he uses when selecting a timepiece. “My Rolex is perfect for me,” he states. “You could say it’s one of my favorite instruments.”

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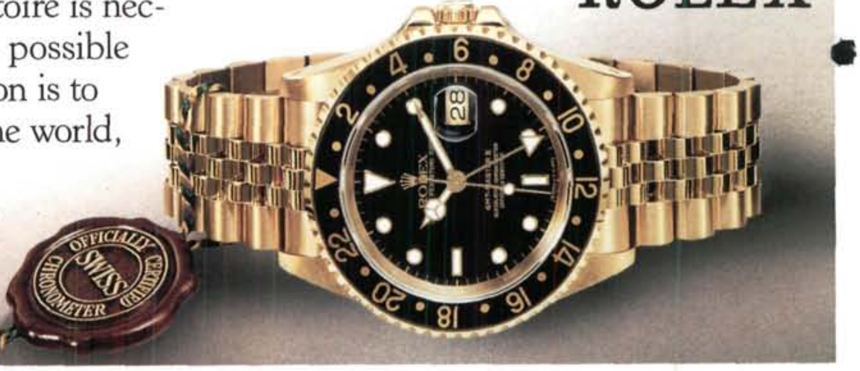

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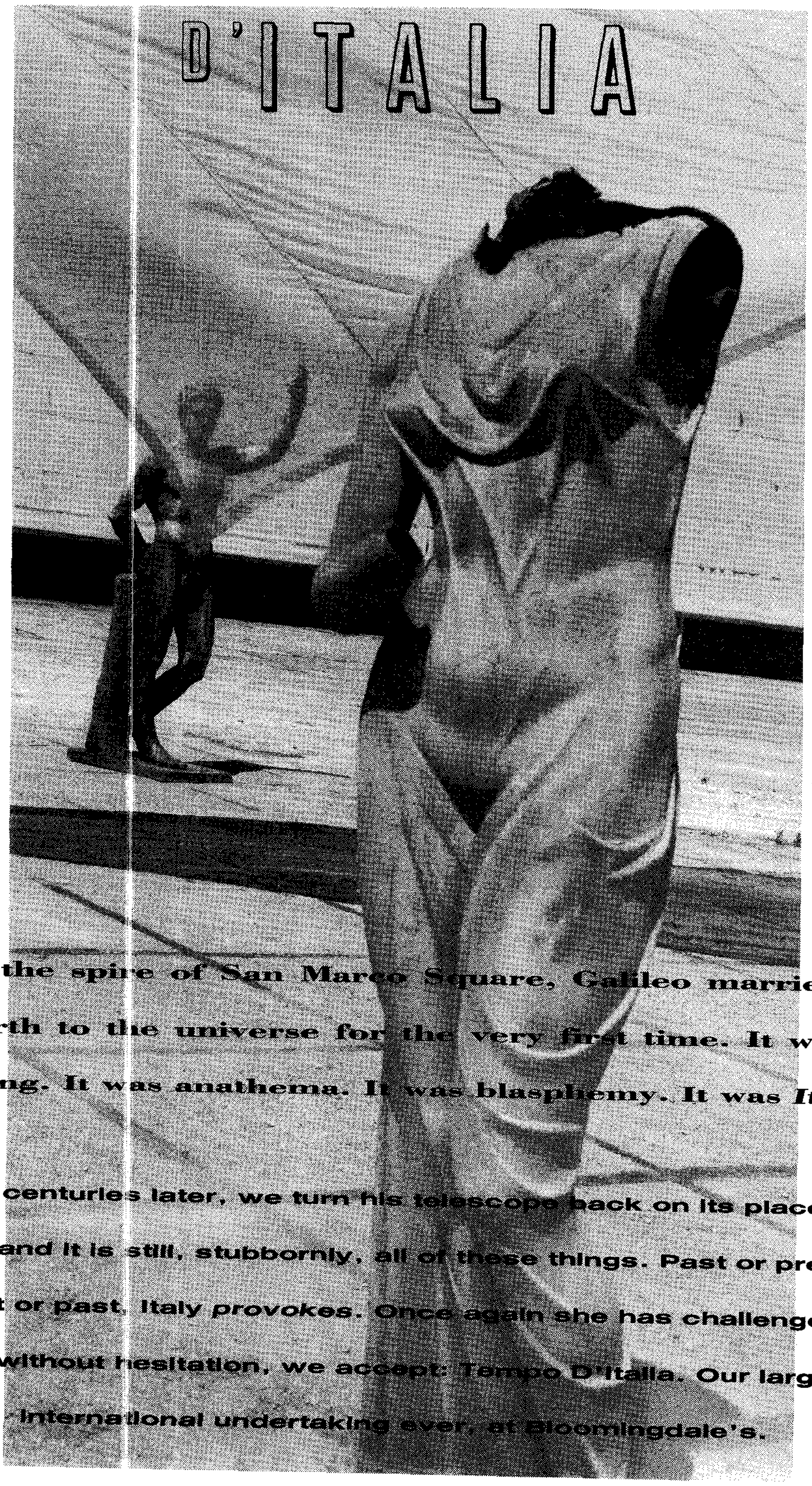

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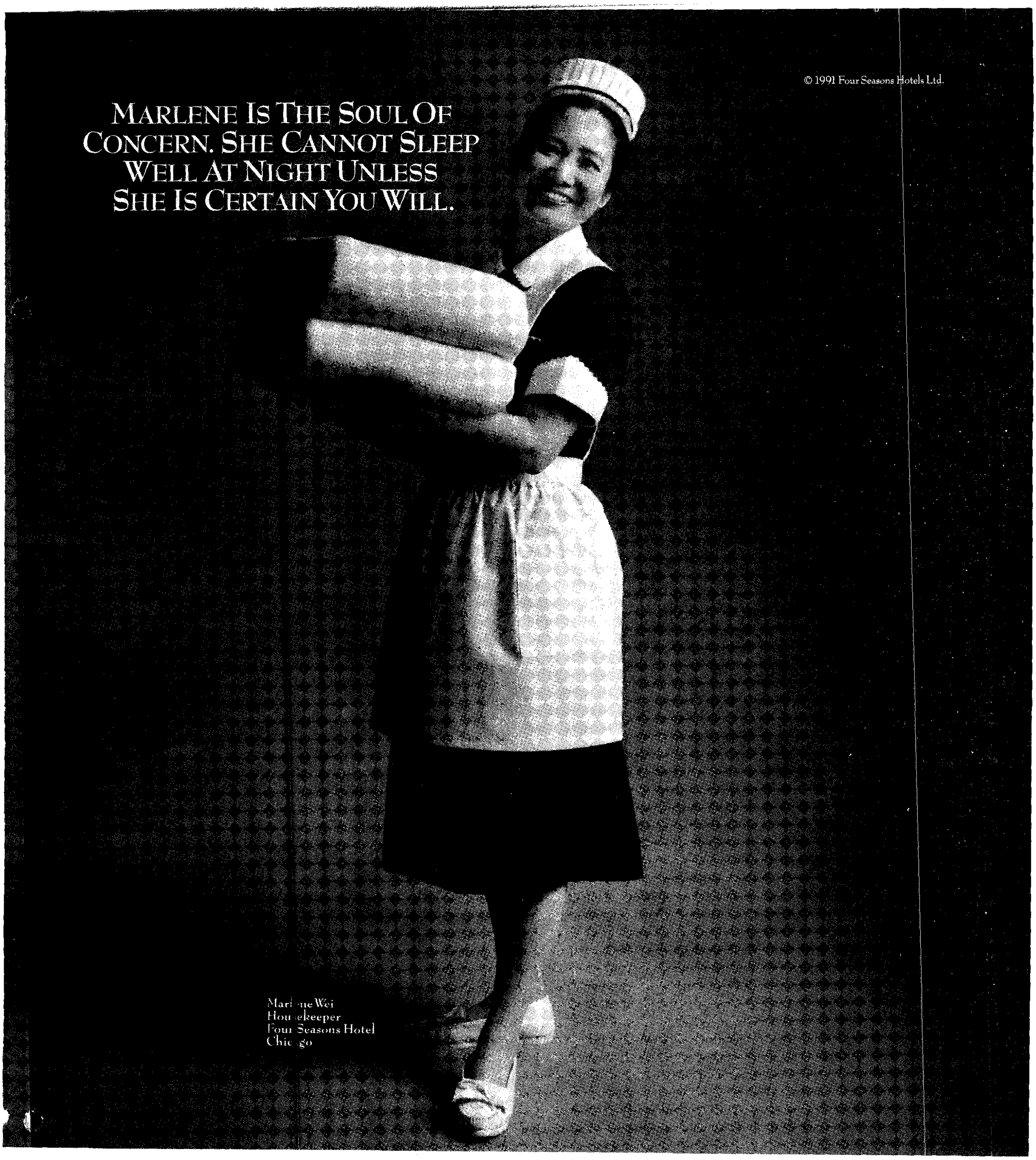
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

NOTHING that the French critic Roland Barthes wrote was as exhilaratingly difficult as his 1970 work "S/Z." Structuralist primer, exemplary explication de texte, moving examination of the reading process—it was all of these. It also made the case for the 1830 story "Sarrasine," an unjustly neglected part of Balzac's "La Comédie Humaine." Given the Barthes-inspired popularity of the Balzac story over the past two decades, especially on university campuses, it's a wonder that up until now no one has thought to turn it into theatre. The story has all the right ingredients: money, European capitals, a castrato.

Castrati alone are a fecund enough historical subject for a dozen evenings in the theatre. As singers, they provide a pretext for music. As employees of Popes and opera impresarios, they furnish grandeur. As eunuchs, they offer gender-bending possibilities galore. All of these characteristics—and more—were exploited by Anne Rice in her cult novel "Cry to Heaven," and all of them are part of the Gloria theatre company's production of "Sarrasine," at Dance Theatre Workshop (219 West 19th Street) through September 15. The story has been brought forward to the present, and the castrato's voice is channelled through three characters: a music-hall chanteuse (Beverley Klein); a slithery young male soprano (François Testory); and an operatic grande dame (the deceptively versatile Bette Bourne). Sheila Ballantine, who plays an aging socialite for whom the castrato reënacts his performances, rounds out the cast. The evening is wonderfully atmospheric, right down to the vapors that greet you at D.T.W.'s door. The music, composed by Nicolas Bloomfield and played by a sensitive quartet, and the text, by Neil Bartlett, are products of sophisticated intelligences. And, despite the nods to sources as divergent as Monteverdi and "Les Miz," nothing feels merely derivative. The evening, however, is emotionally mute—without sufficient focus. Overripeness is all.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Macbeth—Stephen McHattie stars in the Riverside Shakespeare Company's season opener. Previews begin Sept. 13. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000.)

Tartuffe—Molière's comedy, in a translation by Donald M. Frame. With Martin LaPlatney, Joanne Camp, and Frank Geraci. Previews Sept. 10-11. Opens Sept. 12 at 7. (Pearl, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708.)

Unidentified Human Remains and the True Nature of Love—A play by Brad Fraser. In previews. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

OPENED RECENTLY

And the World Goes 'Round: The Songs of Kander & Ebb—A musical revue, with Joel Blum, Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Terry Burrell, and Karen Ziémba. Andrea Green substitutes for Ms. Ziémba in some performances. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18			

Body and Soul—David Mitchell and Tom Delling in John Glines' gay comedy. (Courtyard Playhouse, 39 Grove St. 869-3530.)

Breaking Legs—The Mafia meets Off Broadway. Philip Bosco and Vincent Gardenia play a pair of mobsters who back a new play in order to win a young dramatist for Gardenia's daughter. Tom Dulack wrote the comedy; John Tillinger directed it. With Larry Storch, Nicolas Surovy, and, above all, Susan Giosa as the daughter who spins the plot. (Reviewed in our issue of 6/3/91.) (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Damon Runyon's Tales of Broadway—A show conceived and performed by John Martello. (Double Image, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

The Good Times Are Killing Me—The cartoonist Lynda Barry devised this memory play of words and pop tunes about a racially mixed neighborhood. At the heart of it is the friendship of two little girls, one white, the other black, who are delightfully portrayed by Angela Goethals and Chandra Wilson. The undercurrent of serious comment on race doesn't add much, but every humorous scene scores a bull's-eye. Also with Wendell Pierce and Holly Felton. Mark Brokaw directed. The show was seen this spring at Second Stage. (5/6/91) (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.)

The Jersey Girls—A play by Larry Manogue. (Actors Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 691-6226.)

Lips Together, Teeth Apart—Two couples share a beach house on Fire Island over the Fourth of July weekend, in Terrence McNally's very funny play about a number of serious matters. With Roxanne Hart, Anthony Heald, Jonathan Hadary, and Deborah Rush; directed by John Tillinger. (7/8/91) (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Lost in Yonkers—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in Yonkers during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

The Matchmaker—A dull and discouraging revival of Thornton Wilder's merry farce. (9/9/91) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883. Closes Sept. 22.)

Miss Saigon—Oh, the horror! The horror! (4/29/91) (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.)

Pageant—A musical spoof of beauty contests. Book and lyrics by Bill Russell and Frank Kelly and music by Albert Evans. Conceived and directed by Robert Longbottom. (Blue Angel, 321 W. 44th St. 262-3333.)

Penn & Teller Rot in Hell—Seen recently on the Great White Way, the dynamic duo are now performing their repertoire of tricks Off Broadway. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

Red Scare on Sunset—If you're in the market for a lot of laughs (and a strange catharsis), you couldn't do better than this latest comedy of manners by the actor/writer/farceur Charles Busch—about a Hollywood personality whose paranoid anti-Stalinist fantasies turn out to be true. With this satire on politics, theatre, and sexuality, Busch creates a showcase for his own subtle talents and those of the actress Julie Halston. (8/5/91) (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782. Closes Sept. 15.)

The Secret Garden—This lovely musical adaptation of the classic children's story by Frances Hodgson Burnett isn't just a kiddie show. Subtle, charming, intelligent, and wholly literary in its approach to adaptation, it manages both to be faithful to the spirit of the book and to comment on the particular moment in time that produced it. (5/13/91) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

The Skin of Our Teeth—Thornton Wilder's play, presented by the Jean Cocteau Repertory and directed by Robert Hupp. Craig Smith and Elise Stone lead the cast. (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery, at Bond St. 677-0060.)

Song of Singapore—A musical with a promising concept: turn a Polish veterans' hall into a Singapore night club, circa 1941, and spill murder and mayhem onto the premises. Unfortunately, the lavish settings (by John Lee Beatty) and the musical talent (led by the winsome and versatile Donna Murphy) cannot conceal a very thin story and a host of excruciatingly bad jokes. Another problem: on a busy night the seating arrangements here can be extremely cramped. (17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. 228-0844.)

The Will Rogers Follies—The sets by Tony Walton, the direction and choreography by Tommy Tune, the costumes by Willa Kim, and the row upon row of Ziegfeld girls make a feast for the eyes, but the funny bone and heart are neglected. Keith Carradine makes an engaging, amusing Rogers, but that is not enough, despite Cy Coleman's pleasant score. (5/13/91) (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.). . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.). . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turned thirty-one in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.). . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991½:** This newly revised revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.). . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.). . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.). . . **ONCE ON THIS ISLAND:** An enchanting musical, set in the Caribbean, by Lynn Ahrens and Stephen Flaherty. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.). . . **PERFECT CRIME:** A murder mystery by Warren Manzi. (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 695-3401.). . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.). . . **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright and the director Jerry Zaks. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. Kelly Bishop now has the lead. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

DANCE

ANDRÉ LEVINSON first attended the ballet around his fourth birthday. The work was "The Sleeping Beauty." The place was the Maryinsky Theatre, in St. Petersburg. The time was 1891, just a year after the ballet's world première. "That very day, I had, however prematurely, the revelation of classical dancing," he later wrote. "Beauty" was, for him, a true call to arms. By the time of his death in Paris, at the age of forty-six, Levinson had become the most eloquent, the most well-informed, and the most highly principled spokesman for classical dancing in print. Ballet also served his restless intellect as a passport to dancing at large. His bibliography—which numbers well over eight hundred items—includes essays on dance subjects as far afield as the Javanese adagio and the Tiller Girls. "He was a kind of genius of erudition, a monster of curiosity, and amazingly prolific," write Joan Acocella and Lynn Garafola in their new edition of his selected essays, "André Levinson on Dance: Writings from Paris in the Twenties" (Wesleyan). Their collection demonstrates that he was an inexhaustible source of ideas as well. Here is a sampling:

- "I am sure that an artilleryman thoroughly familiar with the motion of projectiles, able to calculate accurately the trajectory of a shell, the force of the explosion that sets it in motion and the range of the missile released, could much more easily discover the principle of a dancer's leap than some loose-thinking poet, however magnificent his style. For the gunner operates with a knowledge of dynamics."
- "The European dancer, be she a ballerina or a peasant, moves about freely, she leaps in the air and glides and runs, while the Oriental dancer turns in upon herself, lives upon herself, like a statue, turning upon a pedestal. She crouches and stretches. She is a plastic form, coherent but changing. The back hollows, the abdomen swells and sinks. The almost fluid muscles ripple under the glossy skin of the arms, whose sinuous curves undulate in an internal rhythm."
- "You may ask whether I am suggesting that the dancer is a machine? But most certainly!—a machine for manufacturing beauty—if it is in any way possible to conceive a machine that in itself is a living breathing thing, susceptible of the most exquisite emotions."

PILAR RIOJA—Classical Spanish and flamenco dance. Included on the program are four new works: "Danzas" and "Danza Nueva," based on classical court dance, and "Soleá" and "Tener La Esperanza," which combine modern dance and flamenco. (Repertorio Español, Gramercy Arts Theatre, 138 E. 27th St. 889-2850. Sept. 10-12 and Sept. 17-18, all at 8; Sept. 14 at 3; and Sept. 15 at 7. Through Sept. 29.)

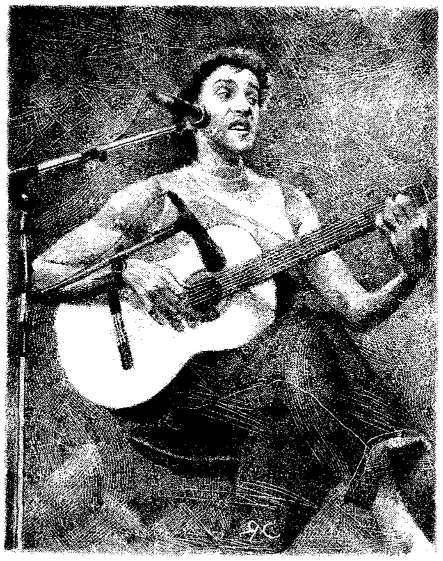
CREACH/KOESTER—A company of five male dancers in "Spartacus of Manhattan," "Untitled #1," and "Slow Boys." (Dia Center for the Arts, 155 Mercer St. Sept. 12-13 at 8:30. For reservations, call 924-0077.)

AMERICAN INDIAN DANCE THEATRE—A troupe of twenty-five dancers and musicians in the opening performances of a three-week engagement. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Sept. 17-18 at 8. Through Oct. 6.)

NIGHT LIFE

WITH fall approaching, it's climatically safe for singers to come out of hiding, and cabarets around town are cashing in. At Café Carlyle, for example, where all has been quiet since Bobby Short packed his bags in June, Barbara Cook opens up on September 11. Ms. Cook, a native of Atlanta, gained fame in the fifties and sixties as a leading lady in Broadway musicals. In the mid-seventies, she launched a career in cabaret, for which she came more than well-equipped—she's a highly trained soprano with a sweeping range and exceptional control. Hers is a voice adaptable to different settings—she has earned raves for both small-ensemble work and Carnegie Hall-size affairs.

Rainbow & Stars has kicked off the season with Julie Wilson, a perennial favorite since she turned up at Michael's Pub in 1984, after an eight-year absence from the club circuit. Since her return, Ms. Wilson, who was a cabaret star in the fifties and sixties (and a frequenter of Broadway and West End stages), has taken on a series of composers—Sondheim, Weill, Porter, and others—both in performance and on recordings. Onstage, she's a striking figure—thin, elegant, given to wearing boas and tucking a gardenia behind one ear. She's known for her keen sense of humor, but she is, above all, a dramatic performer, who uses not only her voice but also her face and her body to wring emotions from a song.



Caetano Veloso at the Ballroom

The Ballroom has lined up the pianist, composer, and singer Dave Frishberg for a six-nighter beginning September 17. There are two, sometimes overlapping schools of thought on Frishberg the songwriter, one likening him to Sondheim for his craftsmanship and use of language, the other dubbing him a latter-day Porter for his sharp social commentary. Some of his tunes—"Peel Me a Grape," "My Attorney Bernie"—have long been hip cabaret standards. Frishberg's pianistic skills aren't to be overlooked either; he began his career as a pianist, and over the years has worked with a long list of jazz notables.

And what of the Oak Room, at the Algonquin, which has been dark all summer? It will reopen later this month, with the fine pop-jazz vocalist Susannah McCorkle. Cabaret fans have their fun cut out for them.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

ARTHUR'S TAVERN, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy, Fridays and Saturdays to Mabel Godwin, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music from nine-thirty.

BALLROOM, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—It's everything a cabaret should be: sleek, elegant, intimate, and slightly decadent. It also offers something that other cabarets do not: tapas, which come from the Spanish restaurant adjoining the club. The Brazilian singer-songwriter-guitarist **CAETANO VELOSO** performs Sept. 10-14. **DAVE FRISHBERG** is in residence beginning Sept. 17.

BIRDLAND, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—Many musicians who visit this jazz house are honored—if that's the word—by having their portraits done, "in concert," by the house artist. These impressionistic renderings round out a glossy décor that includes flying-saucer light fixtures, burgundy velvet drapes, and some neon wading birds. Music from nine. Dining.

BLUE NOTE, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—This blue-on-blue club is the place to find big-league jazz artists; it's an institution and it knows it: how many other clubs sell their own belt buckles? **MIKE MANIERI & STEPS AHEAD** and the **BILL EVANS SUPERBAND** are here Sept. 10-15; the Blue Note's tenth-anniversary celebration starts up on Sept. 17. Music from nine. Dining.

BRADLEY'S, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—Next door, there's a bustling, garishly lit market. Within the narrow walls of this venerable piano-and-bass preserve, however, everything is easy on the eyes and ears. Joanne Brackeen and Cecil McBee are on the stand Sept. 9-14. John Hicks and Walter Booker take over as of Sept. 15, joined by sax player Bobby Watson on the first night and trumpeter Roy Hargrove thereafter. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

CAFÉ SIN-É, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—An unpretentious storefront café devoted to such things as Irish stew and the *Irish Times*. There's no stage per se, but bohemian musicians gather around a piano and work up some wistful sets while bohemian patrons sit writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over one of the two varieties of beer sold here: Budweiser and Rolling Rock. Sin-é means "that's it" in Gaelic and is *not* Sinéad

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NIGHT LIFE–Cont'd

O'Connor's nickname. The café is a nice place to while away an hour, and you never know who'll turn up and tune up. Music generally begins at about eight-thirty.

CARLYLE HOTEL, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—Beginning on Sept. 11, the pastel uptown spa known as the Café Carlyle is home to **BARBARA COOK** Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty.... ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

CAT CLUB, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Sunday nights here belong to the New York Swing Dance Society, an organization devoted to the Lindy Hop. **LOREN SCHOENBERG'S** big band leads the proceedings on Sept. 15. Music from eight to midnight.

CONDON'S, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—In the shadow of the Zeckendorf Towers sits this stucco-walled grotto, whose intimate scale makes it a fine spot for jazz. Bluesman **JIMMY WITHERSPOON** is here Sept. 10-15. Witherspoon is a singer who puts his own imprint on standards, injecting them with personal reminiscence and biting humor. When we saw him a while back, his set included a Jimmy Reed shuffle, Peetie Wheatstraw's "Big Leg Woman," and his own "I Don't Gotta" ("I don't gotta take you to the dentist tomorrow/ cause I'm knocking out your teeth tonight"). The **LOUIE BELLSON** quintet begins work on Sept. 17. Music after nine.

DELTA 88, 332 Eighth Ave., at 26th St. (924-3499)—Feels like home—not your home, but somebody's. The restaurant-and-bar is a gigantic junk shop of a place, where the walls are filled with redneck iconography, where the waiters and waitresses scurry around with such things as chicken-fried steak, and where some jumpy young band or other is always stomping around onstage.

DIVA, 306 E. 81st St. (650-1928)—A newly hatched restaurant and piano bar. It's a modest-sized, brick-walled room that offers Italian fare and, Tuesdays through Saturdays, the musings of pianist **CHARLES DE FOREST.** Three of De Forest's compositions appear on Tony Bennett's last studio album, "Astoria," and one of them, the soaring "When Do the Bells Ring for Me?," has quickly become one of Bennett's regular showstoppers. Music begins around eight-thirty. Closed Sundays.

FAT TUESDAY'S, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—Through the iffy-looking side door, down the famous fun-house tunnel that's lined with mirrors and corrugated tin, and down a short flight of stairs, you'll find this softly lit, low-ceilinged, roughly Manhattan-shaped jazz preserve. The imposing tenor saxophonist **JOE HENDERSON** and the rest of his quartet—**KENNY BARRON, RUFUS REID,** and **AL FOSTER**—are in action for the next two weeks. Henderson made a name for himself as a hard-bopper in the sixties, recording a string of influential records for Blue Note, but his style incorporates diverse influences, and is ultimately his own. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music begins around eight. Dining.

FLANNERY'S, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—Formerly a dive bar called McCarthy's, this two-floor establishment looks as if it had been dynamited and rebuilt from the ashes up. On the ground floor is a well-scrubbed, amiable Irish pub with many of the classic features—pints of Guinness, non-stop TV sports—and a few of the near-classics: a CD jukebox, a portrait of Elvis. Downstairs is a low-ceilinged space that looks like a rec room; on weekends and Tuesdays it's home to a mixture of garage-rock, rockabilly, surf-punk, and psychedelic-rock bands. The **PIPEFITTERS,** a band led by Lou Diamond Phillips (the actor who impersonates Ritchie Valens), performs on Sept. 12. Music from nine on Tuesdays and from eleven on Fridays and Saturdays.

J'S, 2581 Broadway, at 97th St. (666-3600)—An Upper West Side jazz room, one steep flight up from the hurly-burly. Jazz people are on the premises nightly, except Sundays, when a jukebox stocked with sixties rock and soul lights up. This week you can catch groups led by **GENE BERTONCINI** (Sept. 10), **TRISHA CHAMBERLAIN** (Sept. 11), **ROSEANNE VITRO** (Sept. 12), **JUDY BARNETT** (Sept. 13), **MICHAEL HASHIM** (Sept. 14), and **JOE KERR** (Sept. 15). Music starts from eight-thirty Mondays through Thursdays, and from nine Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

KNICKERBOCKER, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—A busy bar-and-grill in the piano-bass district. The musicians set up in the dining room, a clubby-looking space with leather banquettes and well-preserved collectibles: Sunday *Herald Tribune* covers, First World War posters, Hirschfeld cartoons. Up front, at the bar, you can keep your eye on the musicians, the conversationalists, and sidewalk life. Pianist **ROLAND HANNA** works with bassist **PAUL WEST** Sept. 11-14; pianist **RUSS KASSOFF** and bassist **LINC MILLIMAN** get started on Sept. 18. Music from about nine-thirty.

KNITTING FACTORY, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—A frat house for the avant-garde. In some ways, the Knitting Factory doesn't really belong in New York: the cover charge is too reasonable, the management is too laid-back, the audiences are too polite. It's a slice of post-collegiate counterculture that somehow landed on Houston Street. A klezmer festival takes place Sept. 10-15; highlights include the **KLEZMATICS** (Sept. 10), the **KLEZMER CONSERVATORY BAND** (Sept. 13), and **DON BYRON** (Sept. 14-15). Music begins after nine.

LONE STAR ROADHOUSE, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—Spiffed-up theatre patrons walk by this club's façade—a Silver Eagle bus, with tires you can kick—and scratch their heads. Inside, big bearded guys with cowboy hats rub elbows at the bar while newcomers study the Texas memorabilia and, upstairs, the display of vintage Gibson guitars. The dining room, where bands hold sway, features a Wright Brothers-era airplane suspended from the ceiling, a dance floor where you can kick up some dust, and a balcony for quiet types. **DR. JOHN** will be here on Sept. 13. Music after nine. Dining.

MANNY'S CAR WASH, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. **JOAN OSBORNE,** who performs here on Sept. 11, is not a particularly well-kept secret, nor should she be. The twenty-eight-year-old, Kentucky-born singer and her band offer a bright, pop-inflected variety of blues. Osborne has a wonderfully raspy voice, over which she exerts an extraordinary amount of control, and she is usually seen slinking about the stage, lolling her head dreamily, shaking her kinky red hair, and letting out growling variations on the "aaaah yeah"/ "alllll *right*" theme. Sets from nine-fifteen, except Sundays, when they begin at eight.

MARQUEE, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—A rock club, just off the West Side Highway, that is one of the city's main venues for college-radio fare. **APB** will be here on Sept. 12; the melodic Seattle rock outfit **MUDHONEY** comes in on Sept. 14; and the **BULLETBOYS** appear on Sept. 18.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the Hoboken Sound and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Among the bands performing this week are the **YOUNG FRESH FELLOWS.** The band, which hails from Seattle, began releasing records in the mid-eighties, offering satiric, eclectic songs that fell somewhere between underground rock and novelty pop. The Fellows are flying a little straighter of late, and they'll be here on Sept. 13, in a double bill with the **PIPEFITTERS.**

MICHAEL'S PUB, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—**MEL TORMÉ,** whose well-preserved pop-jazz baritone can be heard in this midtown jazz lair as of Sept. 10, was singing on the radio regularly by the age of four. Since then, he co-wrote that song about "Chestnuts roasting on an open fire"; he made his movie début, along with Sinatra, in "Higher and Higher"; and he penned a frank biography of Judy Garland, as well as his own autobiography, 1988's "It Wasn't All Velvet." Tormé's recent shows have continued to be lively, but often he isn't onstage very long. Because Tormé can always bring 'em in, his shows can be so packed that patrons barely have room to swivel their heads. It gets harder and harder for clubgoers to live in the past. Shows Tuesdays through Satur-

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NORTHWEST AIRLINES

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

days at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A moondust-in-your-hair cabaret where a club soda costs, well, a *lot*. There are plenty of niceties if you're so inclined: an ear-popping express elevator in which you can mingle with the famous; tables scattered with plastic diamonds and sapphires; and rest-room attendants who hover near the sink asking "Is the water too warm?" **JULIE WILSON** can be found here for the next few weeks. Shows from nine. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to Howie Wyeth's ragtime trio, Tuesdays and Fridays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and his Stompers. Show times vary.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—This decaying theatre was once Studio 54, where the late Steve Rubell's henchmen helped popularize the policy of turning away the unbeautiful. Now it's the home of one of the city's biggest, oldest, and loudest rock clubs, which was formerly housed in a decaying ballroom in the East Village. The club features a broad stage, mobile-home-size speakers, plenty of room to shimmy, and, for the sedentary, a giant Big Brother video screen. Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk café; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. The **LASZLO GARDONY** trio appears on Sept. 11. The electrified big band of the late Gil Evans, now under the direction of his son, the trumpeter **MILES EVANS,** is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—Located on a Chelsea block that has become an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, an indoor miniature-golf course, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), this roller-rink-size bar-and-restaurant is slicker and roomier than the original Tramps, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains. On Sept. 13-14, Donald Harrison and Tommy Ridgley make music with the Guardians of the Flame Mardi Gras Indians, with **DR. JOHN** joining them on the second night.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room—which, with its black walls, black pillars, and black pipes and ducts, resembles a live-in Nevelson sculpture—salsa bands pack them in on Mondays at nine.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—This windowless, wedge-shaped basement has an illustrious history that embraces everyone from Judy Holliday to Lenny Bruce, from Pete Seeger and Leadbelly to Miles Davis and Sonny Rollins. The décor is homey and a little faded, like an attic full of memorabilia. The **ARTHUR BLYTHE** quartet is on hand Sept. 10-15; **TERENCE BLANCHARD'S** quintet takes charge on Sept. 17. Mondays are reserved for the **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA.** Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad. Were we in the business of dispensing stars, we'd send three or four **ZACHARY RICHARD'S** way. The Louisiana-based singer-accordionist, who'll do his joyous zydeco stomping here Sept. 12-13, released "Women in the Room" last year, an album of music as whimsical as Lyle Lovett's and as wistful as Daniel Lanois's. Richard's live performances are as good an opportunity as Manhattanites are likely to get to do the Cajun two-step, although the singer's softer, more thoughtful side tends to get lost in all the shuffling. Music at ten.

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CONCERNED CITIZEN

"Liberty Prop," a new sculpture just erected at the Broadway edge of City Hall Park, is a comment on the sometimes schizophrenic ways in which Americans use political language and imagery. The piece's main component is a gigantic box open at the top and bottom. It hangs from a flagpole that's covered in outsized sections of Old Glory and huge flash cards that spell out the word "OATH." Inside, also billboard-size, are a quiz about the Constitution, the answers to the quiz, some information about the Vice President's and President's jobs, and a list of such political words as "REPUBLIC," "MINORITY," and "DEMOCRACY," along with their definitions.

The sculpture, commissioned by the Public Art Fund and on view through December, seems particularly well placed: the park is said to be the site of one of the first public readings of the Declaration of Independence. To the work's south stands a statue of Nathan Hale, shirt open and feet tied, ready to give up the one life he has to give, and between that work and City Hall is a pole commemorating the liberty poles patriots gathered around before the American Revolution. Artist David Schafer, who collaborated on his piece with architect Jeffrey Cole, says he continues to find new meanings in it: about patriotism, about the way cities govern their citizens, about dissemination of information. "I'm not an anarchist, I'm a taxpayer," Mr. Schafer says. "This is my way of getting up on my soapbox, I guess."

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

THERE were some guys with ties sweating bullets down front in the box seats, but otherwise Jimmy Connors does not attract a "Tennis, anyone?" type of crowd. Not that any racket-wielding Breck girls, or boys with names like action verbs, and wearing white ducks, pleats, and cables so deep you suspect their skin is grooved, would feel at home at the National Tennis Center's stadium. Excuse us. The Louis J. Armstrong Tennis Stadium. How's that for a tribute to Satchmo?

U.S. Open or no U.S. Open, as sports-enthusiast nights on the town go, this is slumming in the grass. How else can you characterize a pleasure dome uglier than a Channel Home Center, parking facilities that must make the owners of IKEA laugh, a Quonset-hut clubhouse, victuals that could set anyone's training regime back a season, and enough hawking of Ray-Ban, Fuji, K-Swiss, Nike, and Fila (at retail, yet) to make the tournament grounds seem like a shopping mall with nets? There's a Häagen-Dazs cart for each time McEnroe ever cussed a call.

From far away, the box seats look genteel, and the patriarchal announcer does a decent deadpan John Cleese, but up in the cheap seats it's nachos, cigarettes, and quart-size Cokes. Sports psychologists are everywhere. "[Michiel] Schapers can't beat Connors," says one wise-ass. "Look at him. I'd forfeit rather than wear that shirt." But all defer to a seventy-three-year-old Frenchwoman who told us she hits the Open every day at eleven. "Guts. Tennis is guts," she intones, thicker than Aznavour. "Not long hair and posing for calendars. I saw that Agassi in the clubhouse before that game of his. Such an attitude. Like he was going to the cinema. I said to him, 'You have three hours to shape up or you're a loser.' Ha." Just then Connors lunges for an almost impossible shot and makes it. "*Allez, vas-y! Bon!* That man has guts," she beams like his prom date. Connors hits an ace down the middle. "See. The crowd adores him." Connors hits one into the tape and it bobbles over to a disbelieving Schapers. "Even the net loves him. I can't wait to stand and cheer when he wins, because—" Suddenly the Frenchwoman breaks off in mid-sentence, rises, howls joyfully, and throws in some flailing arms to boot. "You missed it," she rebukes us. Reminded that Connors is still two sets from victory, she flicks her hand dismissively and motions us to hurry. "Pay attention! You are worse than Agassi. *Levez!* Get up! Raise your hands! Oh, I love this part."

Do they really do the Wave at Wimbledon?

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

I Wan Jan Puppet Theatre—Hand puppets perform to music. (Taipei Theatre, Rockefeller Center, 1221 Sixth Avenue, Level 2. 373-1850. Sept. 9-14 at 7:30.)

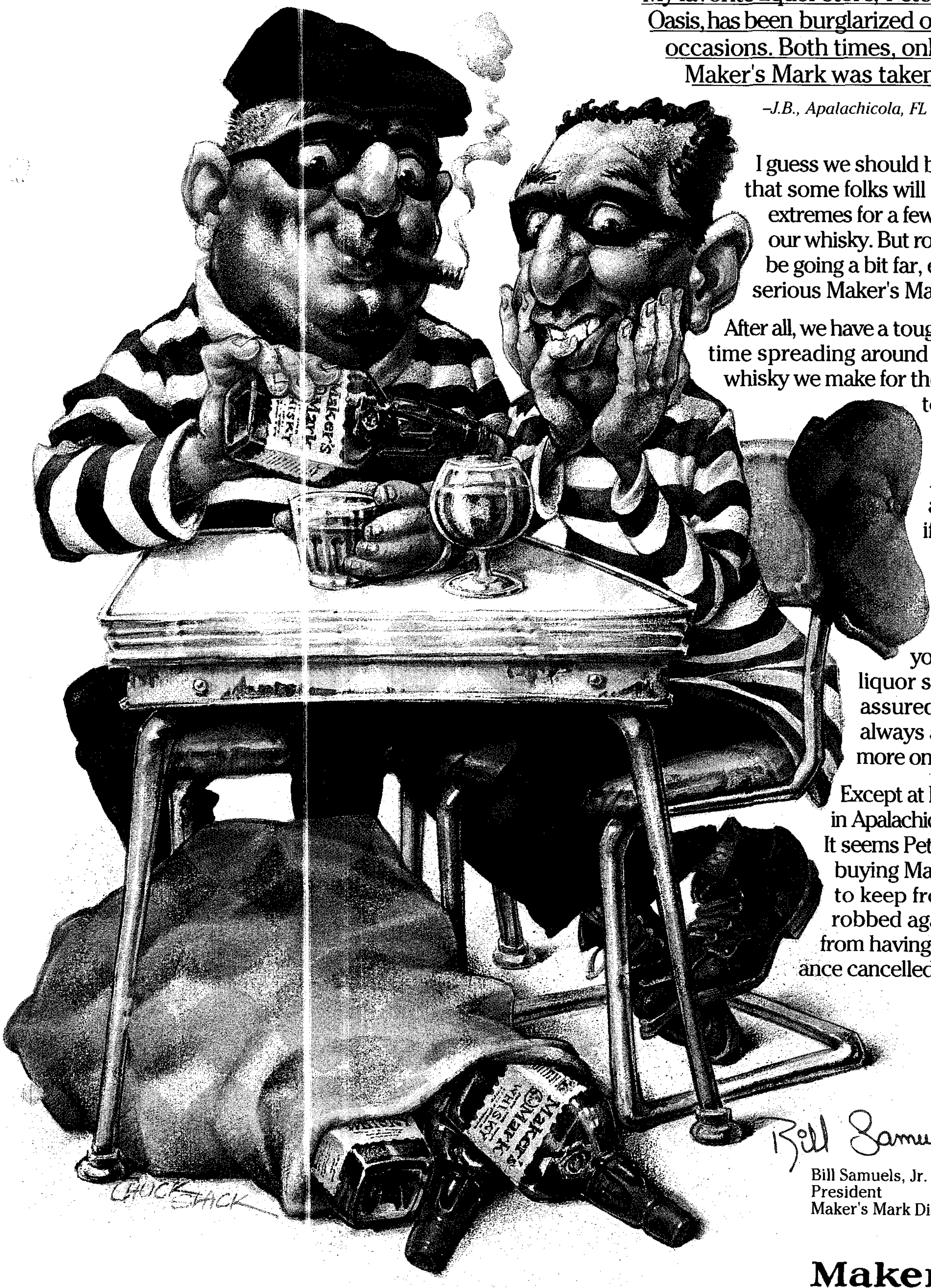
Annie Sprinkle—In her new one-woman show, which is, explicitly, about sex. (Sanford Meisner Theatre, 164 Eleventh Ave., at 22nd St. 206-1764. Tuesdays through Fridays at 8, Saturdays at 7 and 10:30, and Sundays at 7:30. Through Sept. 22.)

Nam June Paik—The artist, in collaboration with the American Museum of the Moving Image, is presenting two days of video art accompanied by music and performance. Sept. 14-15 at 2:30: A bus leaves the Emily Harvey gallery, 537 Broadway, at Spring St. for the American Museum of the Moving Image, in Astoria, Queens. Mr. Paik, Rain House, and James Johnson will be performing live on the bus. . . . ¶ Sept. 14 at 4: A concert by Mr. Paik and the alternative-rock group Bad Brains, with video by Joseph Beuys. . . . ¶ Sept. 15 at 4: A "video opera," which includes dance, live music, and Mr. Paik's footage of Merce Cunningham and John Cage. (35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. For more information and reservations, call 1-718 784-4520.)

P.S. 122—Sept. 12-15 at 8: Ken Campbell in "Furtive Nudist," a one-man show. . . . ¶ Sept. 12-15 at 9: "Finn's Shed," with choreography by Jennifer Monson, music by Zeena Parkins, and sets and costumes by Liz Prince. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288.)

"My favorite liquor store, Pete's Oasis, has been burglarized on two occasions. Both times, only the Maker's Mark was taken."

–J.B., Apalachicola, FL



I guess we should be flattered that some folks will go to such extremes for a few bottles of our whisky. But robbery may be going a bit far, even for a serious Maker's Mark fan.

After all, we have a tough enough time spreading around what little whisky we make for those willing to acquire it by legal means. And we apologize if you're sometimes unable to find a bottle at your favorite liquor store. Be assured there's always a little more on the way.

Except at Pete's Oasis in Apalachicola, Florida. It seems Pete stopped buying Maker's Mark to keep from being robbed again...and from having his insurance cancelled.

Bill Samuels, Jr.

Bill Samuels, Jr.
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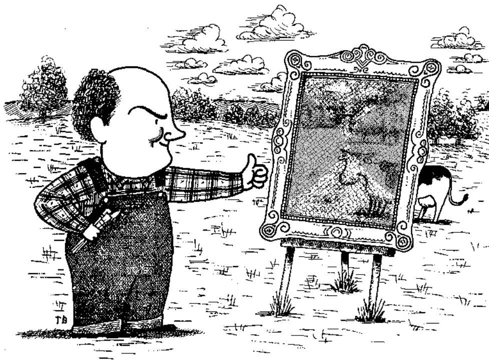


John Steuart Curry at the ACA gallery

ART

WE'VE rarely seen a major American collection of modern or of contemporary art that was very different, really, from any other one of its kind. Big-time American collectors, it seems, tend to gauge their status not by the unusualness or specific power of the things in their possession but according to whether they've got "textbook" examples of this or that artist's work. Take, for instance, the Annenberg Collection (on view at the Met through October 13), with its relentlessly quintessential masterpieces, in their uniform, clichéd, faux-eighteenth-century frames. It's the sort of arrogant and impersonal display that has made Impressionism itself practically a code word, in some circles, for pretentious, haute-bourgeois "good" taste.

Two exhibitions seen in Paris earlier this summer—of André Breton's collection, at the Centre Pompidou, and of the Etienne Moreau-Nélaton donation to the French state, at the Grand Palais—set far more interesting examples. Both shows were full of eccentricities. Both were themselves works of art: explorations of perception and taste. In fact, both collectors were, in different ways, artists. Breton, through his writings and sheer force of personality, was, of course, the lightning rod for Surrealism, and his collection, predictably enough, centers around that movement and its many sources. (Breton's Eskimo objects, for example, are outstanding.) A great collector, like any great artist, ought to have a telling flaw, and Breton's was sticking with the style he helped invent long after it had lost its vitality.

Moreau-Nélaton was himself a talented gentleman-painter, who decided that he would never attain greatness through his first chosen career. So he built on his family's collection—most impressively including Corots and Delacroixes—by acquiring paintings from artists of his own period, ranging from Manet's epical and daunting "Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe" to the heartbreakingly incidental "Le Veus" ("The Widower"), Jean-Louis Forain's large and stylish 1885 portrait of a well-dressed man sitting dejectedly before an open lingerie drawer.

Perhaps in the nineties the American collector should first become an artist *manqué*.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—The exhibition of the Annenberg Collection begins with some exquisite small works by Fantin-Latour, followed by two rooms, devoted to Monet, van Gogh, Gauguin, and Cézanne, that include some of the collection's finest works, such as Monet's "Poppy Field, Argenteuil" (1875), Gauguin's "The Siesta" (1892-94), and Cézanne's "The House with the Cracked Walls" (1892-1894). Farther on are some very good early-twentieth-century works, including Picasso's haunting "At the Lapin Agile" (1905), an important but somewhat overwrought Vuillard, a beautiful Matisse, and a very pretty Bonnard. Through Oct. 13. . . . **NOTE:** The museum's roof garden, planted with nine sculptures by Rodin, is open when the weather permits. Through Oct. 27. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, 11 W. 53rd St.—An exhibition of works by Guillermo Kuitca—including house plans, paintings of beds, and road maps painted on mattresses—is the latest in the "Projects" series. Starts Sept. 13. . . . ¶ "Nudes," a show of fifty photographs by Lee Friedlander taken over the past twelve years. Through Oct. 8. . . . ¶ A small show of posters, catalogues, ads, and magazine covers by the Swiss graphic designer Herbert Matter (1907-84). . . . ¶ Thirteen videotapes made with "low-end" video equipment by artists such as William Wegman, Linda Montano, George Kuchar, and Sadie Benning. Through Nov. 10. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

GUGGENHEIM MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until early 1992.

WHITNEY MUSEUM OF AMERICAN ART, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The museum has recently installed part of its permanent collection along loosely chronological and broadly thematic lines—"American Life in American Art" is the theme—to highly felicitous effect. Among the punchiest and freshest-looking paintings on view are Paul Cadmus's flamboyantly tawdry "Sailors and Floosies" (1938); Grant Wood's subtly colored triptych "Study for Breaking the Prairie" (1935-39); George Tooker's creepy and hilarious "The Subway," of 1950; and a trio of weirdnesses by the Magic Realist Louis Guglielmi, including "Terror in Brooklyn" (1941), in which three veiled women under a bell jar are witnesses to a manifestation that may or may not be religious in nature. An apt last word on "American Life in American Art" is, of course, provided by Andy Warhol. The quotation next to his 1962 "Green Coca-Cola Bottles" reads: "A Coke is a Coke, and no amount of money can get you a better Coke than the one the bum on the corner is drinking. All the Cokes are the same and all the Cokes are good. Liz Taylor knows it, the President knows it, the bum knows it and you know it." . . ¶ Over the past decade it has become a near-cliché to invoke John Baldessari's influence as a teacher. As if to assault paradox—and, perhaps, ironically to embrace Baldessari's pedagogical reputation—this retrospective has been organized into eight loosely chronological, didactically labelled rooms, each of which is further equipped with its own printed, loose-leaf, lesson-cum-exam-question page. In Room 1, for example, we pluck a page with the heading "Lessons on Art and Art Making" and, looking at the wall, find "Wrong," a 1967 word-and-image painting that consists of a silk-screened picture of a man standing in front of a tree on a suburban street. " 'Wrong,' " we read, "breaks the rule that one should never take a picture of someone in front of a tree because it will look as if the tree were growing out of the person's head." It's interesting how much Baldessari eventually picked up from his ex-students and others. If the lessons of the first two rooms provide virtual blueprints for the likes of David Salle, Richard Prince, and Jenny Holzer, the last rooms declare that important teachers never stop learning. Tips from Salle, in particular, are quite obvious by the close of this show, but—more unexpectedly—so are the effects, it seems, of shaped canvases by the abstract painter Elizabeth Murray. Through Oct. 20. . . . ¶ A retrospective of the work of the long-neglected decorative artist Hunt Diederich (1884-1953). Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, 11 to 6.)

BROOKLYN MUSEUM, Eastern Parkway—"Quattrocento," a small exhibition of a few dozen early-Renaissance panel paintings from Italy, shows off another of the many fine corners of the Brooklyn Museum's vast collection. The works are all small and most of them are minor, but they cogently present the history of the quattrocento, giving a sense of its rich spread throughout northern Italy. The show begins with a charming trecento "Last Supper," attributed to Vitale de Bologne, and a marvellous triptych by Maso di Banco, one of Giotto's most gifted pupils, that in [illegible] panel depicts an elongated Christ on a blood-spattered Cross. A curiously stormy world view is presented by the Marchigian Lorenzo d'Alessandro da San Severino, and a mysterious sense of time standing still haunts a little "Venus and Mars" attributed to Palma Vecchio. That work, dated circa 1515, is the latest in the show. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

AMERICAN MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"The Way to Independence," a show of more than five hundred artifacts dealing with the upheaval endured by three generations of Hidatsa Indians and their eventual relocation to a reservation called Independence. Through Nov. 3. . . . ¶ Thirty-five large-format color photographs of endangered North American fish, including lampreys, mud minnows, shiners, and trout. Through Sept. 22. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

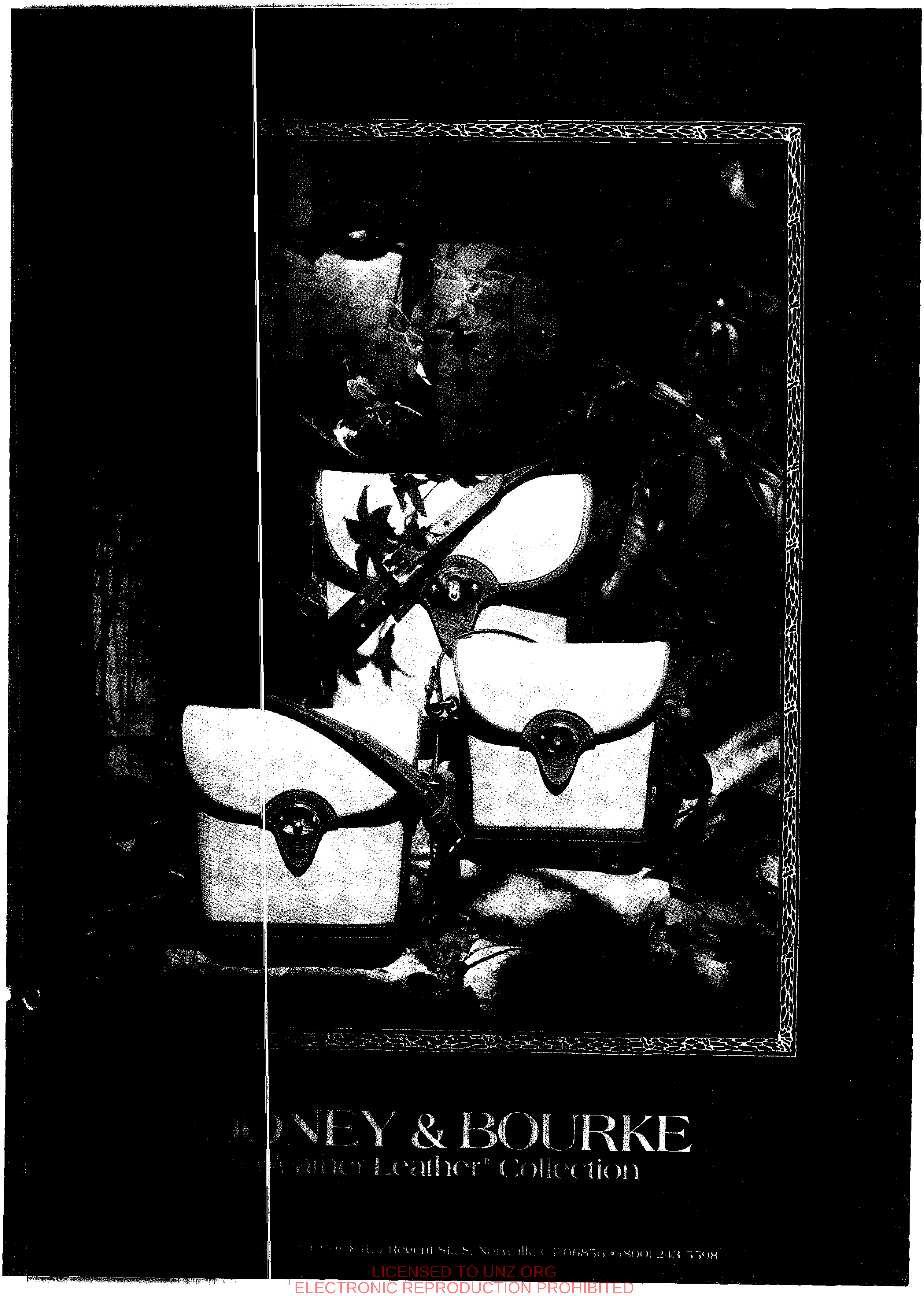
AMERICAN CRAFT MUSEUM, 40 W. 53rd St.—"Frank Lloyd Wright: Preserving an Architectural Heritage" is a show of more than seventy pieces of furniture, art-glass windows, lights, and other decorative objects spanning sixty years of the artist's career. (Open daily, except Mondays, 10 to 5, and Tuesday and Friday evenings until 8.)

COOPER-HEWITT MUSEUM, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—"A Design Resource" is a rotating sampler of nearly a thousand objects drawn from the collection: old tarot cards, tapestry fragments from a few millennia ago, architectural drawings, gilt furniture mounts (including a representation of a tiny pair of human feet), locks, eighteenth-century button samples, lace, chairs of every date and style, ornately beaded boxes, and Viennese tableware. The installation, while a little deconstructively tricky upstairs, flows quite well, and many of the contrasts are entertaining. How can you not love a show that juxtaposes a nineteenth-century birdcage in the shape of a chapel, an Egyptian funerary boat from the Middle Kingdom, and ornate copper food molds? (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

GROLIER CLUB, 47 E. 60th St.—An exhibition of more than a hundred and twenty-five books, posters, prints, and drawings by a little-known *fin-de-siècle* group called Les Incohérents. Starts Sept. 11. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

JEWISH MUSEUM, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—"Painting a Place in America: Jewish Artists in New York, 1900-45." Jewish painters and sculptors have certainly made contributions to the history of twentieth-century American art, but this is a weak idea for an exhibition, and no great historical insight is gained by the segregation. What the viewer is left with is primarily an impression of second-rate, labored art—the essentially boring heaviness of urban social realism, as typified by the Soyer brothers and provincial abstraction. But there are some delightful discoveries in the show, including a witty, Cubistic 1915 portrait of Marsden Hartley by Ben Benn, and a mythical, Old World circus scene by Benjamin Kopman, with shades of Chagall, Ensor, and Marc. Through Sept. 29. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5; Fridays, 10 to 3. Closed Sept. 10 and Sept. 18.)

MUSEUM OF AMERICAN FOLK ART, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—"Paint, Powder, and Leaf" showcases nearly a hundred decorated objects, from tin coffeepots and cannisters to wood chests and iron fire screens. Regional styles from Maine, Connecticut, New York, and



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Pennsylvania are represented. Through Sept. 15. . . . ¶ A show of twenty-four quilts with floral themes, all prize-winners from this spring's Great American Quilt Festival. Through Sept. 15. . . . ¶ Forty-five narrative paintings by Harry Lieberman (1880-1983). The exhibition explores the sources of the artist's imagery in the Hasidic lore of his native Poland. Through Sept. 22. (Open daily, 9 to 9.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—In the exhibition "Illustrating Nature: The Art of Botany," the New York Botanical Garden's collection is represented by ninety-five watercolors, pen-and-ink drawings, books, and dried plant specimens. Through Oct. 20. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"The Interrupted Life" is about that all too permanent interruption: death. Forty-two artists have contributed work in all mediums. Among those represented are David Wojnarowicz, Sarah Charlesworth, Donald Moffett, and Kiki Smith. Starts Sept. 13. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—Forty watercolors of New York and New Jersey landscapes by William Rickarby Miller (1818-93). Starts Sept. 11. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St.—"Documents of Dissent," a show of books, posters, handbills, and journals from China, Tibet, the Soviet Union, the United States, and other countries. Included are the first English translation of "The Gulag Archipelago," the "Black Book of Polish Censorship," and posters by the collaborative group Guerrilla Girls. (Edna Barnes Salomon Room.). . . ¶ A display of recently acquired rare books and manuscripts, including Joseph Conrad's manuscript for "The Secret Sharer" and Washington Irving's for "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow." Through Oct. 12. (Berg Collection.) (Open Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays through Saturdays, 10 to 6.)

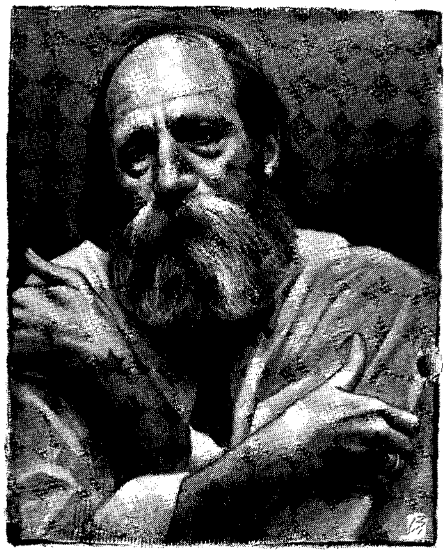
Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Road, Long Island City—Noguchi (1904-88), one of the twentieth century's singular talents, designed this oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of his sculptures. It contains a wide range of his work—from the early surrealistic biomorphic sculptures to several types of stone carvings—and documentation of his prodigious public art. The centerpiece of the museum is a peaceful, ivy-walled garden dotted with the artist's works. Through Nov. 30. (Open Wednesdays and Saturdays, 11 to 6.)

Queens Museum of Art, Flushing Meadow Park—Fifty photographs, by Reginald Marsh, that depict New York's subways and Coney Island, and that were used by the artist as studies for his better-known paintings and drawings. Through Nov. 10. . . . ¶ A small show of paintings and works on paper—all of them diptychs—by Candida Alvarez. Through Oct. 12. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

GALLERIES

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

"Africa Explores: Twentieth-Century African Art"—The great African sculpture that modernist artists and European collectors valued and that shaped our idea of African art is relegated in this show to the final room, where it serves as a startling epitaph for traditions that no longer exist. The exhibition is an attempt to reverse the commonly held belief that contemporary African art is in the doldrums. Although only some of the work is successful, the show is always provocative and often entertaining. The material is organized into five categories—"traditional," "new functional," "urban," "international," and "extinct"—which are used to distinguish, for example, paintings made as "signs" from those made as "art." Perhaps the most inventive works are the Pop coffins of Ghana's Kane Kwei. One, made to transport a taxi-fleet owner to his final resting place, is in the form of a Mercedes-Benz; another resembles an onion. There are lively comparisons here, such as that between Magdalene Odundo's elegant, very modernistic long-necked ceramic vessels and traditional ritualistic statues whose quirky figuration seems somehow related. Painting, a relatively new form for the continent, seems to have reached its most inventive level in Zaire, with the naïve pictographs of Albert Lubaki and the charming political narratives of the self-taught Chéri Samba (including his hilarious "Battle with the Mosquitos"). The catalogue is dense and rich, with everything from photographs of trucks, grave markers, and chiefs' houses to an essay on "Afro-kitsch." Through Dec. 29. (Center for African Art, 54 E. 68th St. Open daily, except Mondays; opens Sundays at noon.)



Lawrence Weiner at
Dia Center for the Arts

"Rethinking Space (II), Certain Uncertainty"—Art galleries seem to have pretty much abandoned the mounting of season-end new-talent shows, but this exhibition, curated by Kenny Schachter and art dealer Sandra Gering, and set in the unlikely location of The Lobby Gallery (in the same building as Deutsche Bank, which sponsored the show), features sculptures by fourteen emergent artists. The show's more interesting works include Fred Tomaselli's gargantuan chandelier made of illuminated beer cans, with a bag of white pills swinging in the center like an obsessive plumb bob; an anti-architectural sculpture, by Simon Ungers, consisting of a triangle of rope attached to the gallery's soaring ceiling and tethered to a heavy steel cube on the floor; and a kind of double image of conformity, by Janine Antoni, that consists of a computer workstation in which every object has been sheathed in blue seersucker, with a necktie of braided human hair draped over the keyboard. The only non-sculptural work is by the Dutch artist Vulto; it consists of several pieces of suspended fabric that have smoked patterns on them—the residue of an elaborate "event" involving fire and shrouds. "I wish I could be a painter," reads his statement accompanying the current exhibition. So do we. Through Sept. 13. (31 W. 52nd St. Open Mondays through Fridays, 9:30 to 6.)

Group Show—This show of so-called art furniture focusses on the work of eighteen practitioners of the craft. The artists have gone to great lengths to entertain the eye with what one presumes are intended to be witty collectibles, and if their works were more soulful they could be to interior decoration what garden follies are to architecture. The pieces, however, are death by luxury—the playfulness of funk ceramics deadened by an addiction to the most garishly exotic woods and crafty tomfoolery. One of the practitioners, Wendell Castle, made some truly interesting high-style furniture in the sixties, much of it in plastic, but in recent years he has indulged his appetite for ultradecadent conversation pieces whose most interesting characteristics are the components lifted from Biedermeier and Ruhlmann. Perhaps there is social commentary somewhere in the show,

Remember when
Coney Island was
riding high.

When international
travel was launched from
the West Side Piers.

And big bands
broadcast from
Manhattan ballrooms.

but it is unclear how ironic the objects are intended to be. The only resonant work of art is a droll Castle cabinet consisting of three tenuously balanced storage boxes supported by a swooning ladder, notable for its sly modesty. Through Sept. 20. (Joseph, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays, closed Saturdays.)

Season Openers—**robert barry,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through Oct. 12); **barbara bloom,** Gorney, 100 Greene St. (starts Sept. 14); **joan brown,** Frumkin-Adams, 50 W. 57th St. (starts Sept. 12); **james o. clark,** Protetch, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 5); **petah coyne,** Shainman, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **john steuart curry,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through Sept. 28); **nancy grossman,** Exit Art, 578 Broadway (through Oct. 12); **donald judd,** Pace, 32 E. 57th St. (starts Sept. 13); **stephanie kirschen-cole,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through Sept. 26); **john mc laughlin** (starts Sept. 12) and **al held** (starts Sept. 10), Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.; **george negroponte,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through Oct. 3); **man ray,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (starts Sept. 11); **adam rolston,** Wessel O'Connor, 580 Broadway (through Oct. 5); **nancy shaver,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (starts Sept. 12); **jim shaw,** Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St. (starts Sept. 12); **robert smithson,** Schermerhorn Hall, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. (opens at 1 Wednesdays through Saturdays, starts Sept. 11); **alan sonfist,** LedisFlam, 584 Broadway (starts Sept. 12); **don van vliet,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. (starts Sept. 13); **ursula von rydingsvärd,** Lorence-Monk, 578 Broadway (starts Sept. 14); **lawrence weiner** and **dan graham,** Dia Center for the Arts, 548 W. 22nd St. (opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays, starts Sept. 12); **krzysztof wodiczko,** Baer, 476 Broome St. (through Oct. 5).

PHOTOGRAPHY

"Between Past and Future: New German Photography" is the title of the most recent issue of *Aperture*, which brings together many of the thoughtful, thought-provoking photographers and artists working in Germany today. The editor of the issue, Charles Hagen, uses the magazine as a forum for historical, philosophical, political, and theoretical perspectives on this fascinating subject, and the publication also gives us a chance to see the heterogeneous sensibilities and ways of working that mark contemporary German photography. You get a sense of the impact that the World Wars have had on the vision of German artists, and of the role memory plays in what they do. The Wall has a prominent role, too, whether literally, metaphorically, or psychologically; the work here comes from both East and West German artists. Today, of course, Germany is no longer officially "divided," but, as so many of these photographs show—from Anselm Kiefer's torn image, "The Miracle of the Serpents," to the many politically charged situations on view—conflict is part of the contemporary German perspective. We haven't had an exhibition in this country that takes on this subject. We should.

Mary Ellen Mark—Mark is a genuinely humane photographer, and her photographs of the effects of poverty on people's lives, and her portraits of individuals who are in confinement for various reasons, are strong because they are all different. She doesn't try to generalize, but instead makes careful and respectful images of individual subjects. Through Nov. 17. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

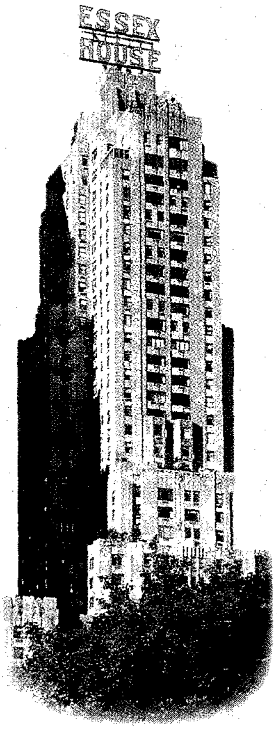
Group Show—An exhibition full of wonderful photographs, more than half of them from the twenties and thirties, by both well-known and more obscure photographers. A sophisticated level of connoisseurship is evident in the choices that have been made here, and there's no theme to the exhibition at all; this is a show that's all about the pleasure of looking at pictures. We were particularly struck by a grouping of four pictures by Brassaï. Each one depicts a different subject, and together they underline what made Brassaï's work so memorable—he was an artist who could capture the night. There's a nighttime photo of a wall at La Santé prison, a desolate, empty image in which shadows of trees climb that wall; and another nighttime shot, of deserted streets, that is so right in mood that you almost fear the sound of footsteps. Through Sept. 20. (Houk Friedman, 1094 Madison Ave., at 82nd St.)

Season Openers—**robert capa,** International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8, through Nov. 17); **lynn davis,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (open Mondays, starts Sept. 12); **sandi fellman,** Baum, 588 Broadway (starts Sept. 12); **david graham** and **e. j. bellocq,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through Oct. 5); **annie leibovitz,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8, starts Sept. 13); **david levinthal,** Borden, 560 Broadway (through Oct. 5); **jim long,** Wessel O'Connor, 580 Broadway (through Oct. 5); **david salle,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (starts Sept. 11); **sandy skoglund,** P.P.O.W, 532 Broadway (through Sept. 28); **jerry uelsmann,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (open Wednesdays until 8, starts Sept. 11); **robert yarber,** Lieberman & Saul, 155 Spring St. (starts Sept. 10).

MUSIC

On Wednesday, September 11, Kurt Masur will conduct—if we have got this straight—his first Avery Fisher Hall concert as music director of the New York Philharmonic. We have already witnessed his first Philharmonic concert since he was announced for the post, and then (this summer, on Long Island) his first Philharmonic concert since the farewell of Zubin Mehta; still to come, on September 12, will be his first regular subscription concert as music director (the season opener is non-subscription).

New York and its orchestra have been getting to know Mr. Masur pretty gradually in his new role, so neither will be waiting for revelations on the eleventh. But it's an important symbolic evening, and the very choice of program makes a statement. First half, American and upbeat: two John Adams works that have established themselves firmly in the repertoire (especially the second, "Short Ride in a Fast Machine"), then Aaron Copland's "Old American Songs," with Thomas Hampson the homegrown soloist. Second half, serious Germanic classic: Bruckner's Seventh Symphony. Both halves stand for continuity: Bruckner is not only a part of the Austro-German mainstream that Mr. Masur was presumably invited here to reaffirm, but also the part of that heritage that the Philharmonic played best under Mr. Mehta. And the orchestra, which Leonard Bernstein shaped in the sixties, is on native soil with Copland and moving forward on a familiar path with Mr. Adams (though not on the path that Pierre Boulez, whose tenure as music director is hardly



Fortunately,
one good thing is
making a comeback.

This fall, after a two-year
renovation, the grand new
Essex House will reopen
on Central Park South.
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at the height of its glory or
you simply remember
the sign on the skyline,
you'll be happy to know that
Nikko Hotels International
has now restored one of
New York's greatest
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even mentioned nowadays, tried to forge).

Press reports on the orchestra's work with Mr. Masur since his appointment was announced have almost all been favorable, and morale within the band, we hear, is high. This great orchestra has been through some difficult years; here's to its latest fresh start.

OPERA

New York City Opera—**cavalleria rusticana** and **pagliacci**, transported to New York at the turn of the century, with RoseMarie Freni, Bronwyn Thomas, and Vincenzo Scuderi (in the former); and Pamela South, Antonio Barasorda, and Sigmund Cowan (in the latter). Richard Bradshaw conducting both. (Sept. 10 at 8 and Sept. 15 at 2.). . . **the cunning little vixen**, a revival (in English) of Janáček's bittersweet operatic fable, based on a Czech comic strip; with Kathryn Gamberoni, Cynthia Rose, John Lankston, and Jan Opalach; Christopher Keene. (Sept. 11 at 8.). . . **le nozze di figaro**, with Elizabeth Hynes, Maureen O'Flynn, Kathryn Gamberoni, Dean Peterson, and William Stone; Scott Bergeson. (Sept. 13 at 8.). . . **madame butterfly**, with Elizabeth Holleque, Robynne Redmon, Stephen O'Mara, and Jeffrey Kneebone; Chris Nance. (Sept. 14 at 2.). . . **the most happy fella**, Frank Loesser's vintage-1956 Broadway musical about problematic liaisons in the California wine country, which made history by expanding its genre to nearly operatic proportions. With Elizabeth Walsh, Karen Ziémba, Elaine Bonazzi, Louis Quilico, Burke Moses, Lara Teeter, and Arthur Rubin; Chris Nance. (Sept. 14 and Sept. 18 at 8.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)

"The Death of Klinghoffer"—Those who followed from afar the hijacking of the cruise ship Achille Lauro, in 1985, can partake of an up-close replay, as interpreted by composer John Adams, librettist Alice Goodman, director Peter Sellars, and choreographer Mark Morris. Singers include Sheila Nadler, Sanford Sylvan, and James Maddalena. Kent Nagano conducts the Brooklyn Philharmonic Orchestra. (Brooklyn Academy of Music, 30 Lafayette Ave. 1-718 636-4100. Sept. 9, Sept. 11, and Sept. 13, all at 8.)

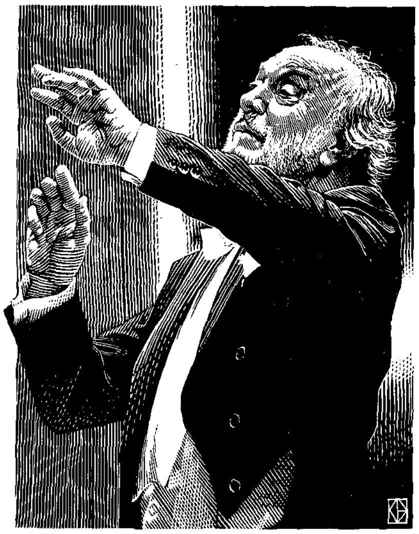
Amato Opera Company—Presenting "The Marriage of Figaro." (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. Sept. 14 at 8 and Sept. 15 at 2:30.)

ORCHESTRAS

New York Philharmonic—The opening concert of the orchestra's season, which will run through May 23. Kurt Masur, the orchestra's new music director, conducts two brief works by John Adams, the second set of Copland's "Old American Songs" (with baritone Thomas Hampson), and Bruckner's Seventh Symphony. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. Sept. 11-14 at 8.)

Prism—Robert Black conducts the chamber orchestra in the première of "The Riverfisher," a 1989 work for soloists and orchestra by Rick Baitz (with soprano Christine Schadeberg and mezzo-soprano Janice Edwards); three pieces by Dinos Constantinides (including a duo for percussion and harp, and another for percussion and saxophone); Arvo Pärt's "Fratres," performed by Mary Rowell (violin) and Mr. Black (piano); and Stravinsky's "Dumbarton Oaks" Concerto. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 16 at 8.)

Manhattan Chamber Orchestra—Richard Auldon Clark conducts a program that includes the New York première of David Amram's "Variations on an American Folk Tune," for flute and strings (the folk tune in question being "Red River Valley"); the "Concerto for Piano and Synthesizer" by Howard Cass (who teaches electronic music at Juilliard, and will here perform the solo parts of both instruments); and two pieces by Jacques Ibert: his "Elizabethan Suite" (written in 1942 for a production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream") and his Flute Concerto (with Eugenia Zukerman as soloist). (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400. Sept. 18 at 8.)



Kurt Masur of the New York Philharmonic

RECITALS

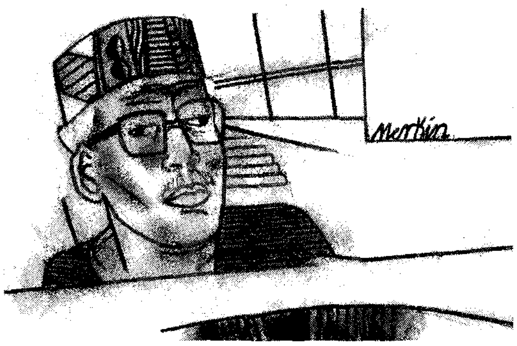
Bargemusic—Presenting chamber music by Mozart, Brahms, and Prokofiev. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. Sept. 12 at 7:30 and Sept. 15 at 4.)

Music from SummerFest—A keyboard extravaganza, featuring eleven musicians performing on a half-dozen different kinds of keyboard instruments. If Bach on the harpsichord (played by Anthony Newman) or Chopin on the concert grand (played by Alexander Slobodyanik) are traditional concert fare, much of the program isn't: for example, Margaret Leng Tan performing "The Banshee" (Henry Cowell's groundbreaking exploration of the piano's outer limits); accordionist Guy Klucevsek playing John Zorn's "Roadrunner"; Steven Mayer playing meticulous transcriptions of intricate jazz improvisations by Art Tatum; Robert Kapilow performing his own "Celestial Navigation" on the celeste; or a synthesizer (for the moment unassisted by human forces) intoning a new work by Michael Starobin. Other participants are Craig Nies, Vladimir Viardo, Tanya Stambuk, Jeffrey Biegel, and Ilana Vered, performing both alone and in various combinations. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440. Sept. 14 at 8.)

John Walker and Friends—The organist, who is music director of the Riverside Church, is joined by an ensemble of singers and instrumentalists in Asian, African, and gospel music as well as classical European works. (Riverside Church, Riverside Dr. at 120th St. Sept. 15 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Composers' Forum—Pianists Ursula Oppens, Yvar Mikhashoff, and Anthony de Mare perform solo works by Conlon Nancarrow, Frederic Rzewski, Meredith Monk, Aaron Kernis, and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 15 at 3.)

Ellen Orner—Violinist, performing Bartók's Solo Violin Sonata, as well as the New York premières of unaccompanied works by the Spanish composer Cristobal Halffter and the Canadian composer Harry Somers. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 16 at 8.)



Randy Weston

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Grateful Dead—A Grateful Dead concert is an institution old enough and strangely American enough to warrant an exhibit at the Smithsonian. It's a movable Chautauqua, a portable Mardi Gras, a temporary city where any evening of the week can be the weirdest Saturday night of your life. It's an even bet whether the music will lift off toward ecstasy or meander and noodle through the swamps of repetition, but, either way, the bumper sticker is correct: there is nothing like a Grateful Dead concert. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. Sept. 9-10, Sept. 12-14, and Sept. 16-18, all at 7:30.)

Branford Marsalis—Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Sept. 11-15 at 8.

Composers' Forum—Presenting Myra Melford and Kirk Lightsey. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. Sept. 12 at 8.)

Shirley Bassey—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Sept. 12-14 at 8.

Special Beat—Academy Theatre, 234 W. 43rd St. 307-7171. Sept. 12 at 9.

Aretha Franklin—With Peabo Bryson. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Sept. 13-14 at 8.)

Randy Weston African Rhythms Orchestra—Alice Tully Hall. 875-5050. Sept. 13 at 8. . . . ¶ Prospect Park Band Shell, Prospect Park West at 9th St., Brooklyn. Sept. 15 at 3. No tickets necessary.

"Music of African-American Composers"—With Cynthia Haymon, Moses Hogan, Ellis Marsalis, William Warfield (narrator), and Derek Lee Ragin. Also with a combined choir of singers from Morehouse College, Jackson State University, and several other schools; directed by Roland Carter. (Carnegie Hall. Sept. 15 at 2:30.)

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Mets—Vs. the Montreal Expos, Sept. 9 at 7:40 and Sept. 10 at 1:40. . . . ¶ Vs. the Chicago Cubs, Sept. 18-19 at 1:40.

Yankees—Vs. the Boston Red Sox, Sept. 12-13 at 7:30, Sept. 14 at 1:30, and Sept. 15 at 8. . . . ¶ Vs. the Milwaukee Brewers, Sept. 16-18 at 7:30.

Jets—Vs. the Buffalo Bills, Sept. 15 at 4.

(The Mets play at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499; the Yankees play at Yankee Stadium, 293-6000; and the Jets play at Giants Stadium, the Meadowlands. For information about Jets tickets, call 1-516 538-6600.)

RACING

Horses—At Belmont: Daily, except Tuesdays, at 1. The Flower Bowl is on Sept. 14; the Woodward and the Futurity are on Sept. 15. . . . At the Meadowlands: Tuesdays through Saturdays at 7:30. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Mondays through Saturdays at 8, Tuesdays at 1, and Sundays at 6.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

"New York Is Book Country"—The annual celebration of texts will be held on Sept. 15, from 11 to 5. Cruise Fifth Avenue, from 48th to 57th Streets, and browse through the books, books, books.

County Fair—In Queens, actually. Competitive activities include corn-husking and pie-eating contests. Simple pleasures include hayrides, bandstand concerts, and bake sales. (Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Parkway, Floral Park, Queens. Sept. 14-15, from 11 to 6. For more information, call 1-718 347-3276.)

A Reading—Russell Banks reads from his new novel. (Endicott Booksellers, 450 Columbus Ave., at 81st St. Sept. 11 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Walks—Sponsored by Citywalks. Sept. 14 at 1: A tour of the West Village. . . . Sept. 15 at 1: A tour of the Lower East Side. (For reservations, call 989-2456.). . . ¶ Sponsored by Adventure on a Shoestring. Sept. 14 at 4: A walk around Beekman Place and Sutton Place. . . . Sept. 15 at 2:30: A walk through Chelsea. (For reservations, call 265-2663.)

Memorandum—The Feast of San Gennaro, in Little Italy, is Sept. 12-22.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18			

FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 18.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St (995-2000)
Theatre 1: "Slacker" (directed by Richard Linklater).
Theatre 2: "City Slickers" (Ron Underwood), with Billy Crystal, Daniel Stern, Bruno Kirby, Jack Palance, Patricia Wettig, and Helen Slater.
Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 4: The 23rd International Tournée of Animation.
Theatre 5: Through Sept. 12: "An Angel at My Table" (Jane Campion), with Kerry Fox. From Sept. 13: "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (John McNaughton), with Eric Bogosian.
Theatre 6: "Trust" (†).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-71[illegible]1)
"New Jack City" (†); and "La Dolce Vita" (1960, Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Anita Ekberg.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "Barton Fink" (†).
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 3: "Barton Fink" (†).

Loews Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th. (982-0400)
Theatre 1: "Thelma & Louise" (Ridley Scott), with Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis.
Theatre 2: "Defenseless" (†).
Theatre 3: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 12: "The Pope Must Die" (Peter Richardson), with Robbie Coltrane, Beverly D'Angelo, and Herbert Lom. From Sept. 13: "Liebestraum" (Mike Figgis), with Kevin Anderson, Pamela Gidley, Bill Pullman, and Kim Novak.
Theatre 5: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 6: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).
Theatre 7: "Dead Again" (†).

Cinema Village 12th Street, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"Eating" (Henry Jaglom).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "The Miracle" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Doctor" (†).
Theatre 3: "One Hand Don't Clap" (Kavery Dutta), with Lord Kitchener and Calypso Rose.
Theatre 4: "Naked Tango" (Leonard Schrader), with Mathilda May, Fernando Ray, Esai Morales, and Vincent D'Onofrio.
Theatre 5: "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Charles Lane.
Theatre 6: Through Sept. 12: "Where" (Gabor Szabo; in Hungarian). From Sept. 13: "Blood and Concrete" (Jeffrey Reiner), with Billy Zane, Jennifer Beals, and Darren McGavin.
Theatre 7: (Matinées only) "101 Dalmatians" (†); and (evenings only) "Everybody's Fine" (Giuseppe Tornatore, in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni.

Cinema Village 3rd Avenue, between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)
"Festival of Animation 1991."

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (2[illegible]0-8000)
Theatre 1: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen.
Theatre 2: "Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man" (Simon Wincer), with Mickey Rourke and Don Johnson.
Theatre 3: "City Slickers" (Ron Underwood), with Billy Crystal, Daniel Stern, Bruno Kirby, Jack Palance, Patricia Wettig, and Helen Slater.
Theatre 4: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 6: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (Kevin Reynolds), with Kevin Costner.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"The Doctor" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "101 Dalmatians" (†); and (evenings only) "Thelma & Louise" (Ridley Scott), with Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis.
Theatre 2: "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Charles Lane.
Theatre 3: "Doc Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 4: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen.
Theatre 2: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 3: "Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man" (Simon Wincer), with Mickey Rourke and Don Johnson.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Hot Shots!" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Boyz N the Hood" (†).

Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: "Doc Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 2: "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Charles Lane.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Hot Shots!" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
Through Sept. 12: "City Slickers" (Ron Underwood), with Billy Crystal, Daniel Stern, Bruno Kirby, Jack Palance, Patricia Wettig, and Helen Slater.
From Sept. 13: "Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll" (John McNaughton), with Eric Bogosian.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 13: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 2: "Double Impact" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Pure Luck" (Nadia Tass), with Martin Short and Danny Glover.

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "Defenseless" (†).
Theatre 2: "Barton Fink" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 17: "The Doctor" (†). From Sept. 18: "Paradise" (Mary Agnes Donoghue), with Melanie Griffith, Don Johnson, and Elijah Wood.
Theatre 2: "Naked Tango" (Leonard Schrader), with Mathilda May, Fernando Ray, Esai Morales, and Vincent D'Onofrio.
Theatre 3: (Matinées only) "101 Dalmatians" (†); and (evenings only) "The Miracle" (†).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen.
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"The Commitments" (†).

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 2: "Crooked Hearts" (Michael Bortman), with Jennifer Jason Leigh, Peter Coyote, Vincent D'Onofrio, and Peter Berg.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
"The Story of Boys and Girls" (Pupi Avati, in Italian).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"The Pope Must Die" (Peter Richardson), with Robbie Coltrane, Beverly D'Angelo, and Herbert Lom.

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Dead Again" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 13: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 2: "Hot Shots!" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "Thelma & Louise" (Ridley Scott), with Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis.
Theatre 2: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 17: "Swan Lake—The Zone" (1990, directed by Yuri Illienko; in Ukrainian). From Sept. 18: "Black Lizard" (1968, Kinji Fukasaku; in Japanese).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man" (Simon Wincer), with Mickey Rourke and Don Johnson. From Sept. 13: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 2: "Double Impact" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Jungle Fever" (Spike Lee), with Wesley Snipes, Annabella Sciorra, Samuel L. Jackson, Lonette McKee, John Turturro, Anthony Quinn, Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, and Frank Vincent.

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Hot Shots!" (†).
Theatre 2: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender).

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "Truly, Madly, Deeply" (†).
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 12: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen. From Sept. 13: "My Mother's Castle" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.
Theatre 3: "My Father's Glory" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.
Theatre 4: Through Sept. 12: "Truth or Dare" (Alek Keshishian), with Madonna. From Sept. 13: A Frank Capra retrospective.

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 2: "Hot Shots!" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Commitments" (†).
Theatre 4: "Defenseless" (†).
Theatre 5: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).
Theatre 6: "The Commitments" (†).
Theatre 7: "Doc Hollywood" (†).
Theatre 8: Through Sept. 12: "Pure Luck" (Nadia Tass), with Martin Short and Danny Glover. From Sept. 13: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 9: "Double Impact" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender).
Theatre 2: "Child's Play 3."
Theatre 3: "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Charles Lane.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
"The Pope Must Die" (Peter Richardson), with Robbie Coltrane, Beverly D'Angelo, and Herbert Lom.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "Tatie Danielle" (Etienne Chatiliez; in French), with Tsilla Chelton.
Theatre 2: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender).
Theatre 3: "City Slickers" (Ron Underwood), with Billy Crystal, Daniel Stern, Bruno Kirby, Jack Palance, Patricia Wettig, and Helen Slater.
Theatre 4: "Regarding Henry" (Mike Nichols), with Harrison Ford, Annette Bening, and Mikki Allen.
Theatre 5: "Up Against the Wall."
Theatre 6: "Thelma & Louise" (Ridley Scott), with Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Commitments" (†).

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"The Naked Gun 2½: The Smell of Fear" (David Zucker), with Leslie Nielsen.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Thelma & Louise" (Ridley Scott), with Susan Sarandon and Geena Davis.

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "Barton Fink" (†).
Theatre 2: "Barton Fink" (†).

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
Through Sept. 12: "My Mother's Castle" (Yves Robert, in French), with Julien Ciamaca.
From Sept. 13: "Dogfight" (Nancy Savoca), with River Phoenix and Lili Taylor.

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (Kevin Reynolds), with Kevin Costner.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"The Doctor" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"The Commitments" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "Uranus" (Claude Berri, in French), with Jean-Pierre Marielle, Philippe Noiret, Michel Blanc, Gérard Desarthe, Gérard Depardieu, and Daniel Prevost.
Theatre 2: "Europa Europa" (†).
Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"Hot Shots!" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "City Slickers" (Ron Underwood), with Billy Crystal, Daniel Stern, Bruno Kirby, Jack Palance, Patricia Wettig, and Helen Slater.
Theatre 2: "The Pope Must Die" (Peter Richardson), with Robbie Coltrane, Beverly D'Angelo, and Herbert Lom.
Theatre 3: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (Kevin Reynolds), with Kevin Costner.
Theatre 4: "Dead Again" (†).
Theatre 5: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 6: "Doc Hollywood" (†).

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: Through Sept. 12: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 13: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.
Theatre 2: "Defenseless" (†).

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Charles Lane.
Theatre 2: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "Robin Hood: Prince of Thieves" (directed by Kevin Reynolds), with Kevin Costner, Alan Rickman, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio.
Theatre 2: "Terminator 2: Judgment Day" (†).
Theatre 3: "Defenseless" (†).
Theatre 4: "Boyz N the Hood" (†).
Theatre 5: "Hot Shots!" (†).
Theatre 6: Through Sept. 12: "Point Break" (Kathryn Bigelow), with Patrick Swayze, Keanu Reeves, Gary Busey, and Lori Petty. From Sept. 13: "Dead Men Don't Die."

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)
"True Identity" (Charles Lane), with Lenny Henry, Frank Langella, and Charles Lane.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)
Theatre 1: "Harley Davidson and the Marlboro Man" (Simon Wincer), with Mickey Rourke and Don Johnson.
Theatre 2: "Body Parts" (Eric Red), with Jeff Fahey.
Theatre 3: (Separate admissions) "Jungle Fever" (Spike Lee), with Wesley Snipes, Annabella Sciorra, Samuel L. Jackson, Lonette McKee, John Turturro, Anthony Quinn, Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, and Frank Vincent; and "Do the Right Thing" (1989, Lee), with Danny Aiello and Lee.

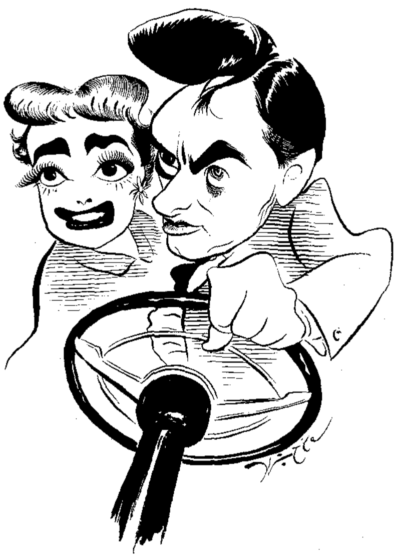
Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)
"Dead Again" (†).

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)
Theatre 1: "Double Impact" (Sheldon Lettich), with Jean-Claude Van Damme.
Theatre 2: Through Sept. 12: "Child's Play 3" (Jack Bender). From Sept. 13: "Freddy's Dead: The Final Nightmare" (Rachel Talalay), with Robert Englund and Lisa Zane.

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)
Theatre 1: "Straight Out of Brooklyn" (Matty Rich).
Theatre 2: "Doc Hollywood" (†).

Virile, innovative filmmaking galvanizes Jean Renoir's near-great 1938 naturalistic melodrama "La Bête Humaine" (playing September 13 and 16 at the Museum of Modern Art). Jean Gabin stars as Jacques Lantier, a take-charge railroad engineer who feels compelled to murder the women who move him. The conception (based on Emile Zola's famous novel) is mechanical: Jacques is a bomb with a ninety-minute fuse. Yet Renoir enriches the story with miraculous depictions of how this man's labor salvages a portion of his life. In the opening sequence, as Jacques and his stoker (Julien Carette) complete their Paris-to-Le Havre run, Renoir celebrates the vibrancy of honest, open-air work and the beauty of competence. With a crew that included his cameraman nephew, Claude Renoir, Jr., who strapped himself to the cowcatcher to get the most thrilling shots, Renoir captures the grimy excitement of mastering a hurtling engine and bringing a train in safely to the clean, conservatory-like contours of Le Havre's terminal.

As soon as Jacques disembarks, Renoir engulfs him in a workers' subculture that's fuelled by camaraderie and common purpose as well as the usual rivalries. Before long, we learn the secret of Jacques's tortured soul. Thereafter, Renoir's cinematographer, Curt Courant, and his production designer, Eugene Lourie, emphasize (in Lourie's words) "the visual melancholic poetry of smoke, soot, and steam." This is a film noir that only Renoir could create. Simone Simon's Séverine, the kittenish wife of Le Havre's stationmaster, suggests a myriad of motivations. (Simon is subtly, splendidly provocative.) The doom-laden plot can't squelch the moviemaking energy. "La Bête Humaine" is a vigorous anomaly: a downbeat rouser.



At Theatre 80 St. Marks, Joan Crawford and John Ireland in "Queen Bee"

REVIVAL HOUSES

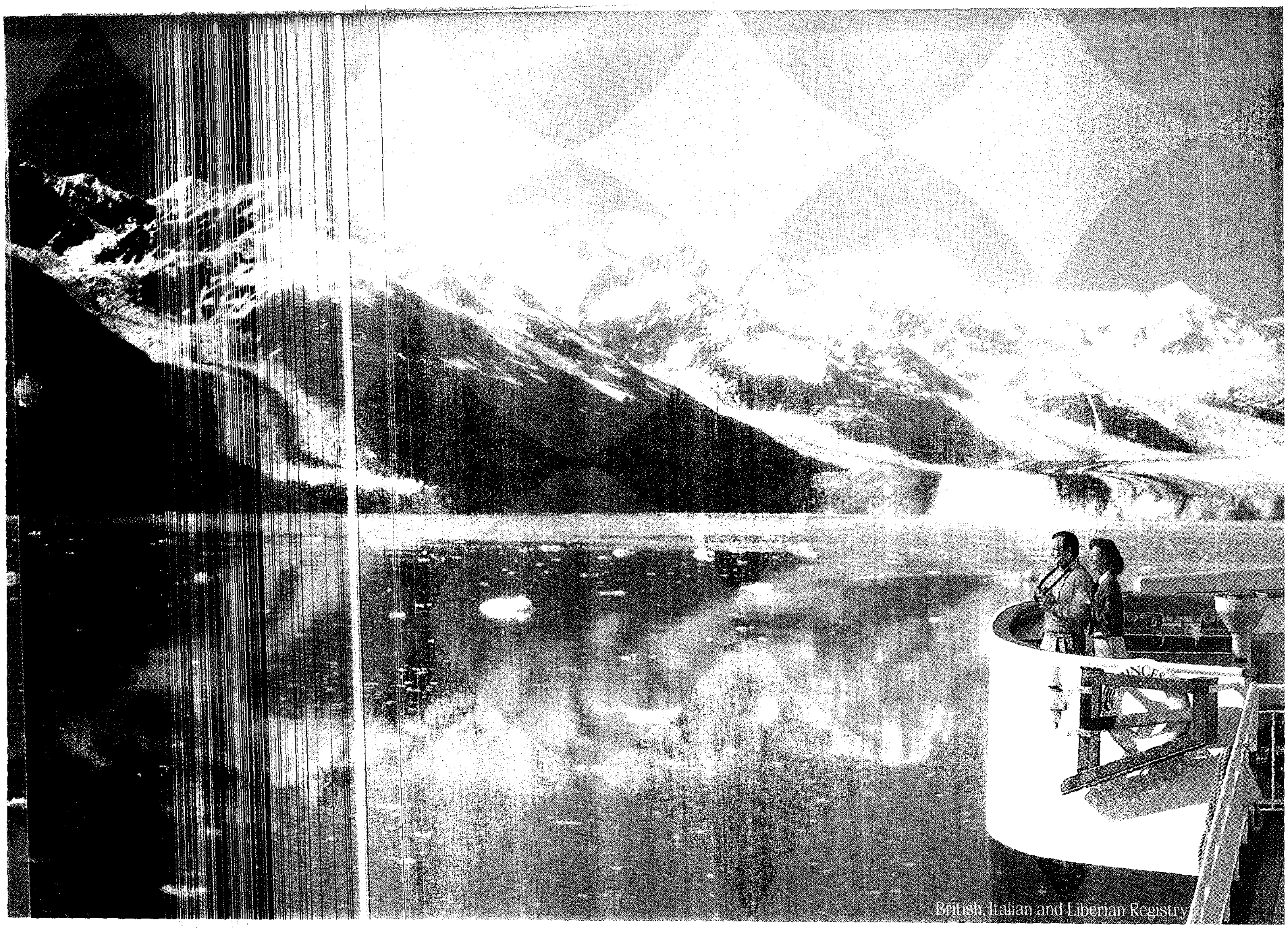
Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)
Sept. 9: "Ginger and Fred" (1986, directed by Federico Fellini; in Italian), with Marcello Mastroianni and Giulietta Masina; and "The Night of the Shooting Stars" (1982, Paolo and Vittorio Taviani; in Italian), with Omero Antonutti.
Sept. 10-11: "Veronika Voss" (1982, Rainer Werner Fassbinder; in German), with Rosel Zech; and "Circle of Deceit" (1982, Volker Schlöndorff; in German).
Sept. 12-14: "Sunday Bloody Sunday" (†); and "Blow-Up" (1966, Michelangelo Antonioni), with Vanessa Redgrave and David Hemmings.
Sept. 15-17: "Women in Love" (1970, Ken Russell), with Alan Bates, Oliver Reed, Glenda Jackson, and Jennie Linden; and "Marat/Sade" (1967, Peter Brook), performed by the Royal Shakespeare Company.
Sept. 18: "The Green Room" (1979, François Truffaut; in French), with Truffaut, Nathalie Baye, and Jean Dasté; and "The Story of Adèle H." (†).

Film Forum 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Through Sept. 10: "Nosferatu" (1922, F. W. Murnau; a German silent film), with Max Schreck; and "Aelita" (1924, Yakov Protazanov; a Russian silent film).
Sept. 11-12: "Captain Kronos: Vampire Hunter" (1974, Brian Clemens), with Horst Janson; and "Near Dark" (1987, Kathryn Bigelow), with Adrian Pasdar, Jenny Wright, Bill Paxton, Jenette Goldstein, and Lance Henriksen.
Sept. 13-14: "A Clockwork Orange" (†); and "Dr. Strangelove" (1964, Stanley Kubrick), with Peter Sellers, George C. Scott, Sterling Hayden, Keenan Wynn, and Slim Pickens.
Sept. 15-16: "Solaris" (1976, Andrei Tarkovsky; in Russian).
Sept. 17: "Suspiria" (1977, Dario Argento), with Jessica Harper; and "Four Flies on Grey Velvet" (1972, Argento), with Michael Brandon and Mimsy Farmer.
From Sept. 18: "Robot Monster" (1953, Phil Tucker), with George Nader; and "Retik, The Moon Menace" (1952, Fred C. Brannon).

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)
Sept. 9: "Night Is My Future" (1947, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Mai Zetterling; and "The Devil's Wanton" (1949, Bergman; in Swedish).
Sept. 10: "Dr. No" (1963, Terence Young), with Sean Connery, Ursula Andress, and Joseph Wiseman; and "Thunderball" (1965, Young), with Connery, Adolfo Celi, Claudine Auger, and Luciana Paluzzi.
Sept. 11: "Luna" (1979, Bernardo Bertolucci), with Jill Clayburgh and Matthew Barry; and "The Conformist" (1970, Bernardo Bertolucci; in Italian), with Jean-Louis Trintignant, Stefania Sandrelli, and Dominique Sanda.
Sept. 12: "Queen Bee" (1955, Ranald MacDougall), with Joan Crawford, Barry Sullivan, Betsy Palmer, John Ireland, and Lucy Marlow; and "Harriet Craig" (1950, Vincent Sherman), with Crawford and Wendell Corey.
Sept. 13-14: "Dinner at Eight" (1933, George Cukor), with Jean Harlow, John Barrymore, Lionel Barrymore, Marie Dressler, and Billie Burke; and "The Women" (†).
Sept. 15: "Double Indemnity" (1944, Billy Wilder), with Barbara Stanwyck, Fred MacMurray, and Edward G. Robinson; and "Sorry, Wrong Number" (†).
Sept. 16: "Juliet of the Spirits" (1965, Fede[illegible] Fellini; in Italian), with Giulietta Masina and Sandra Milo; and "Il Bidone" (†).
Sept. 17: "Twelve Angry Men" (1957, Sidney Lumet), with Henry Fonda, Lee J. Cobb, and Jack Warden; and "Witness for the Prosecution" (1958, Billy Wilder), with *Tyrone Power, Marlene Dietrich,* Charles Laughton, and Elsa Lanchester.
Sept. 18: "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?" (1966, Mike Nichols), with Elizabeth Taylor, Richard Burton, George Segal, and Sandy Dennis; and "Butterfield 8" (†).

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—Sept. 9 and 12 at 2:30: "Sullivan's Travels" (1941, directed by Preston Sturges), with Joel McCrea and Veronica Lake. . . . ¶ Sept. 9 at 6 and Sept. 10 at 2:30: "No Man of Her Own"



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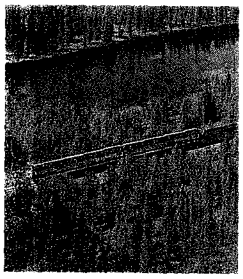

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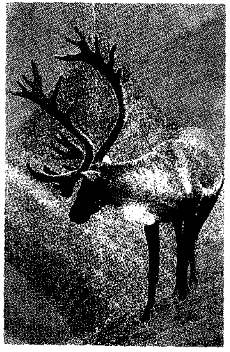


PRINCESS ALASKA THE LOVE BOAT℠

MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

(1950, Mitchell Leisen), with Barbara Stanwyck, Jane Cowl, and John Lund. . . . ¶ Sept. 10 and 12 at 6: "Matewan" (1987, John Sayles), with Chris Cooper, James Earl Jones, and Will Oldham. . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 2:30 and Sept. 16 at 6: "Human Desire" (1954, Fritz Lang), with Glenn Ford, Gloria Grahame, and Broderick Crawford. . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 6 and Sept. 16 at 2:30: "La Bête Humaine" (see blurb on page 16). . . . ¶ Sept. 14-15 at 2: "Shoah" (1985, Claude Lanzmann). The nine-hour-plus documentary, shown in two parts. . . . ¶ Sept. 17 at 2:30 and 6: "Freedom Is Paradise" (1990; Sergei Bodrov; in Russian).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—A series of Western films. Sept. 10 at 2: "The Last Movie" (1971, Dennis Hopper), with Hopper. . . . ¶ Sept. 11 at 2: "Kid Blue" (1973, James Frawley), with Dennis Hopper and Warren Oates. . . . ¶ Sept. 12 at 2: "McCabe & Mrs. Miller" (1971, Robert Altman), with Warren Beatty and Julie Christie. . . . ¶ Sept. 13 at 4:30: "Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid" (1973, Sam Peckinpah), with James Coburn and Kris Kristofferson.

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—Sept. 9 at 7 and 9: "Together Alone" (1991, P. J. Castellaneta). . . . ¶ Sept. 9 at 7:30 and 9:30: "Coal Miner's Granddaughter" (1991, Cecilia Dougherty). . . . ¶ Sept. 10-14 at 7 and 9: Ten different programs of short films from the 5th New York Lesbian and Gay Experimental Film Festival. . . . ¶ Sept. 12-13 at 10:30: "Transcrypts: Some Notes Between Pricks" (1991, Simon Leung). . . . ¶ Sept. 15 at 7 and 9: "Voices from the Front" (1991). . . . ¶ Sept. 15 at 7:30 and 9:30: Three short films about AIDS. . . . ¶ Sept. 18 at 7: "I Was Born, But . . ." (1932, Yasujiro Ozu; a Japanese silent film). . . . ¶ Sept. 18 at 9: "Even Mud If It Moves" (1991, Sarah Rosenblatt), "Just Hold Still" (1989, Jem Cohen), and "Eating the Family Dog" (1990, Malissa Daniel).

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Barton Fink—The Coen brothers' macabre comedy about a blocked writer in 1941 Hollywood is densely packed with allusions, clever dialogue, ingenious visual jokes, startling plot twists, and imaginative atmospheric effects, yet it feels thin. It's an empty tour de force, and what's dismaying about the picture is that the filmmakers (Joel Coen directed, Ethan Coen produced, and they wrote the script together) seem inordinately pleased with its hermetic meaninglessness. Fink (John Turturro), the protagonist, is a left-wing New York playwright—obviously based on Clifford Odets—who signs a contract to write screenplays in Hollywood. His first assignment is a wrestling picture for Wallace Beery. He can't get started on it: he sits in his seedy, depressing hotel room, stares at the typewriter, and feels defeated. The Coens treat this emblematic figure of thirties culture with merciless contempt. They quickly expose him as a phony, a buffoon, and a talentless hack, and then spend the rest of the movie punishing him. The picture is designed to visit ever more grotesque indignities on a character who's pitiful from the outset; there's not much fun in that. And there's no fun at all in Turturro's hyperactive performance. He gapes and blinks and stammers and contorts his body into ungainly poses, and his mouth never seems to close: the way he plays this leftist intellectual, the movie might as well have been called "The Nutty Pinko." The Coens' interests are purely academic, and their prankish formalism becomes very irritating in the course of the picture. There's nothing at stake in the filmmakers' systematic dismantling of their hero and all he stands for—except, perhaps, their desire to demonstrate their superiority to the ethics and aesthetics of an earlier time. The Coens appear to be taking their lack of seriousness seriously: they're nihilist showoffs. Also with John Goodman, Michael Lerner, John Mahoney, Judy Davis, and Tony Shalhoub. The movie won awards for best picture, best director, and best actor (Turturro) at the 1991 Cannes Film Festival.—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 9/9/91.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Coronet, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

Il Bidone ("The Swindlers"; 1955)—This Fellini film, made directly after "La Strada," wasn't a success in Italy, or in this country, either. The tone is uncertain; one keeps expecting the movie to be something different from the harsh story it turns out to be. Broderick Crawford (in a role conceived for Bogart), Richard Basehart, and Franco Fabrizi are con artists who cheat gullible peasants. The film doesn't quite work, but it isn't negligible; it has some of Fellini's most realistic passages, and Broderick Crawford's remorse for his crimes, and his end, alone on a mountain road, are painful in a simple, direct way. Giulietta Masina plays Basehart's wife. Written by Fellini, Tullio Pinelli, and Ennio Flaiano. In Italian.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 16.)

Boyz N the Hood—The writer and director, John Singleton, is a twenty-three-year-old graduate of the U.S.C. film school. This movie, his first, is a classically constructed—and therefore rather predictable—coming-of-age drama about young black men growing up on the mean streets of south-central Los Angeles. The picture conveys a vivid sense of the dangers, both physical and emotional, of day-to-day existence in this ravaged urban environment. Even the quietest domestic scenes are charged with a kind of battle-front tension: there's always the ominous metronomic beat of police helicopters in the background, and sudden sputters of gunfire seem to intrude on every moment of calm or reflection. It's a war zone, and its inhabitants—the people on the front lines—mostly don't have the luxury of planning long-range survival strategies: they're too busy reacting to the immediate, unremitting daily threats. Singleton's evocation of real people's struggles to find some measure of peace and sanity in these grim urban circumstances is heartfelt and often moving, and the movie provides a welcome corrective to the dehumanizing sensationalism of the local-news version of inner-city life. But the young filmmaker's professionalism and precocious self-assurance sometimes work against his best instincts. Singleton's plot is disappointingly conventional; it obeys screenwriting-class rules. The experience he's dealing with here deserves something more than the tidy dramatic structure that he has imposed on it. We get glimpses of what the movie might have been in the complex, magnetic performance of Ice Cube, a rap star (formerly of N.W.A.), who plays a neighborhood gangster type named Doughboy. Also with Cuba Gooding, Jr., Larry Fishburne, Nia Long, Tyra Ferrell, and Angela Bassett.—T.R. (Loews Village Theatre VII, Murray Hill Cinemas, Eastside Cinema, 86th Street East Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

At the Anthology Film Archives, Ozu's "I Was Born, But . . ."

Butterfield 8 (1960)—The John O'Hara novel that seemed perfect for the movies, plus the role that seemed perfect for Elizabeth Taylor—and this is the garish mess it became. Daniel Mann's direction is maybe even worse than the Charles Schnee–John Michael Hayes script. With Laurence Harvey; Dina Merrill, doing a noble wife to end all noble wives; and a vacuum on the screen that is said to be Eddie Fisher.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 18.)

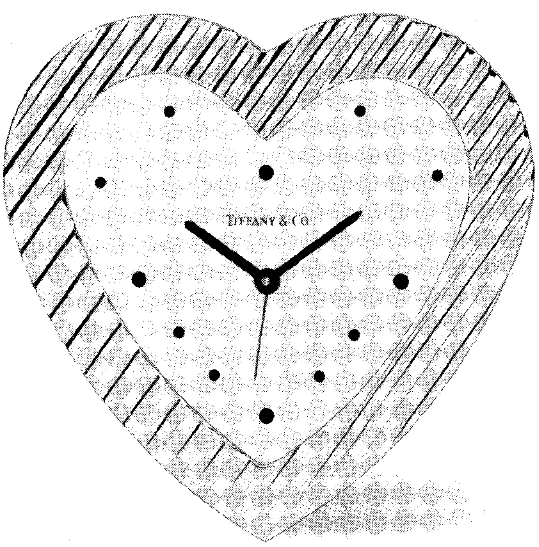
A Clockwork Orange (1971)—This Stanley Kubrick film might be the work of a strict and exacting German professor who set out to make a porno-violent sci-fi comedy. The movie is adapted from Anthony Burgess's 1962 novel, which is set in a vaguely socialist future of the late seventies or early eighties—a dreary, routinized England that roving gangs of teen-age thugs terrorize at night. In this dehumanizing society, there seems to be no way for the boys to release their energies except in vandalism and crime. The protagonist, Alex (Malcolm McDowell), is the leader of one of these gangs; he's a conscienceless schoolboy sadist who enjoys stealing, stomping, raping, and destroying, until he kills a woman and is sent to prison. There he is conditioned into a moral robot who becomes nauseated by thoughts of sex and violence. Burgess wrote an ironic fable about a future in which men lose their capacity for moral choice. Kubrick, however, gives us an Alex who is more alive than anybody else in the movie, and younger and more attractive, and McDowell plays him exuberantly, with power and slyness. So at the end, when Alex's bold, aggressive punk's nature is restored to him, it seems not a joke on all of us (as it does in the book) but, rather, a victory in which we share, and Kubrick takes an exultant tone. Along the way, Alex has been set apart as the hero by making his victims less human than he; the picture plays with violence in an intellectually seductive way—Alex's victims are twisted and incapable of suffering. Kubrick carefully estranges us from these victims so that we can enjoy the rapes and beatings. Alex alone suffers. And how he suffers! He's a male Little Nell—screaming in a strait-jacket during the brainwashing; sweet and helpless when rejected by his parents; alone, weeping, on a bridge; beaten, bleeding, lost in a rainstorm; pounding his head on a floor and crying for death. Kubrick pours on the hearts and flowers; what is done to Alex is far worse than what Alex has done, so society itself can be felt to justify Alex's hoodlumism. With Patrick Magee and Adrienne Corri; score by Walter Carlos.—P.K. (Film Forum 2; Sept. 13-14.)

The Commitments—Alan Parker's film is a loose, friendly musical comedy about the brief career of an Irish soul band. The Commitments are the brainchild of an energetic young music enthusiast named Jimmy Rabbitte (Robert Arkins), who lives in a poor Dublin neighborhood. He puts together a ten-piece group that learns, eventually, to play precise and spirited versions of soul classics in the Memphis style. The music of the Commitments isn't original, but that doesn't prevent it from being enormously entertaining: the band's hard-won proficiency charms us. Parker concentrates on the day-to-day details of rehearsals and performances; he seems to revel in the complexity of the group's musical, emotional, and sexual interactions, and he does full comic justice to the petty irritations of life in a band. The movie gives us a vivid picture of Dublin's poverty and urban blight, but it's more interested in capturing the rhythm of the characters' wit than in showing us how oppressed they are. What holds the Commitments together is a combination of Jimmy's ingenuity, their common pleasure in making music, and the daily challenge of responding to their fellow band members' provocations with quick, profane humor. The kids' verbal sparring is another kind of music—maybe the true sound of Dublin soul. Until the last half hour, when the direction gets a little pushy the picture has an offhand, unassuming grace. Most of the Commitments are played by young Dublin musicians who answered a casting-call advertisement. They're a vivacious and spontaneous crew: Andrew Strong, Angeline Ball, Maria Doyle, Glen Hansard, Kenneth McCluskey, Félim Gormley, Dave Finnegan, Dick Massey, and Michael Aherne. The only professional actors among them are Bronagh Gallagher and Johnny Murphy (as the group's guru, a fiftyish trumpet player known as Joey the Lips). Colm Meaney does a very funny turn as Jimmy's Elvis-worshipping dad. The screenplay is by Dick Clement, Ian La Frenais, and Roddy Doyle, from Doyle's novel. The songs are great—chosen, with unusual intelligence, from the repertoires of Otis Redding, Aretha Franklin, Wilson Pickett, and other soul giants.—T.R. (8/26/91) (Beekman, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and 62nd & Broadway.)

Dead Again—This murder mystery, directed by Kenneth Branagh from a wildly complicated screenplay by Scott Frank, wears its inanity on its sleeve. It shuttles breezily between the present day, in which an L.A. detective named Mike Church (Branagh) is trying to discover the identity of an attractive amnesiac (Emma Thompson), and the late forties, in which a European composer and conductor (also Branagh) may or may not have murdered his pianist wife (also Thompson). These stories are, of course, connected: the amnesiac might even be a reincarnation of the conductor's wife, stabbed to death with a pair of scissors forty years earlier. Branagh makes no attempt to disguise the script's preposterousness. He revels in it, both as actor and as director. The mood of the picture is both frivolous and spooky, and the suspense often seems a function of sheer giddiness: as the movie dances, with drunken insouciance, toward the simultaneous climaxes of its two stories, the tension we feel is partly fear that Branagh won't be able to maintain his precarious balance. Finally, the picture does come crashing down. When it's time to wrap up the mystery, the movie leaves too many of the plot's enigmas unresolved, and Branagh's insouciance loses its charm. Throughout, he has toyed affectionately with mystery-fiction conventions and old-movie style, and his dash and flair have carried us along. But the botched conclusion casts a bit of a pall over the reckless fun that the movie has given us. In the end, Branagh's approach to the genre seems negligent, insultingly cavalier. Also with Derek Jacobi, Andy Garcia, Hanna Schygulla, and (in a hilarious cameo) Robin Williams.—T.R. (9/9/9) (Loews Village Theatre VII, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, U. . East, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza.)

Defenseless—The tail doesn't wag the dog, it merely swats some of the fleas that infest this mongrel thriller. Barbara Hershey is the thousandth smart female lawyer since "Jagged Edge" to fall for a shady client, in this case J. T. Walsh: he turns out to be married to Hershey's college roommate (played by Mary Beth Hurt). Sam Shepard is the male lead—the cop who investigates Walsh's murder. The movie starts out flip, squeezing laughs from the sleaziness of the porno world and the ostentation of L.A.'s nouveau riche; then it becomes hypocritically "moral." James Hick' script (from a story by Hicks and Jeff Burkhart) brings up legal issues it never rules on. Audiences are likely to raise more objections than the lawyers do. Hershey skillfully skirts of breakdown, Hurt is weirdly funny and dissociated, and Shepard milks his taciturnity for humor as well as tension. There's even a slick final twist. But these virtues don't compensate for a narrative that recklessly cuts suspects and victims in and out of the story line. It's the suspense-film equivalent of a gerrymander. Martin Campell directed.—M.S. (Loews Village Theatre VII, Baronet, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

Doc Hollywood—The cast is amiable, but the movie is routinely ingratiating. Michael J. Fox plays a plastic surgeon en route from Washington, D. C., to Beverly Hills, who



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crashes his '56 Porsche Speedster in Grady, South Carolina, "the squash capital of the South." There he learns about life beyond liposuction. Grady is a TV-bred baby boomer's fantasy. At times, it's Mayberry with breasts, peopled with likable eccentrics and down-home beauties—including a smart, sexy gal who plans to stay put (Julie Warner) and a live wire who's aching to get out (Bridget Fonda). At other times, it's a racially corrected version of the cultured Dixie in PBS's "The Civil War": Fox's ornery medical superior (Barnard Hughes) recites poetry, and the 58th Grady Squash Festival features a special screening of Buster Keaton's "The General." Fonda gets to ply her ticklish erotic rascality, and Woody Harrelson, as an inexplicably smoldering insurance agent, jolts every scene he's in with aberrant comic energy. But there's a jerry-built climax and a protracted post-climax. And the hero's odyssey is too easy. He turns out to be a small-town boy himself; Fox simply gets back to where he once belonged. Michael Caton-Jones directed; Peter Seaman, Jeffrey Price, and Daniel Pyne wrote the script, from Laurian Leggett's adaptation of "What? . . . Dead Again?" by Neil Shulman, M.D.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, Chelsea Cinemas, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema.)

The Doctor—Although it's sure to hook some viewers who want to see the medical establishment get knocked, this is no exposé—it's yet another story of identity crisis in the professional class, a fraternal, if not identical, twin of "Regarding Henry." William Hurt plays the surgical golden boy who develops a case of galloping humanity after he's diagnosed with throat cancer; Christine Lahti and Charlie Korsmo play his neglected wife and son; Elizabeth Perkins is the life-force who inspires him (she's suffering from a Grade IV brain tumor); and, in matched parts, Mandy Patinkin is a callous Jewish doctor (Hurt's longtime partner) and Adam Arkin is a saintly Jewish doctor (who shows Hurt correct values). The director, Randa Haines, and the screenwriter, Robert Caswell, titillate the audience with a barrage of doctors' jokes and then try to prove that the cynical professionalism of hospital staffs is no laughing matter. In effect, the movie goes from comic shtick to problem-drama shtick, and fuses them. Hurt's performance is the type usually described as "accomplished," but what exactly does it accomplish? It's a careful embodiment of a clammed-up individual; not a hint of zest or dirt or soulfulness seeps out. Based on "A Taste of My Own Medicine," by Ed Rosenbaum, M.D.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Gramercy, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through Sept. 17.)

Europa Europa—This superb film by the Polish director Agnieszka Holland is based on the memoirs of Salomon Perel, a German Jew who spent much of the Second World War passing for Aryan in an élite Hitler Youth academy. The movie dramatizes this almost inconceivable survival story with a surprisingly light touch. It bounds from one jaw-dropping episode to the next with the speed and the unnerving neutrality of a picaresque adventure, and never pauses to judge its ambiguous hero; it's content to let the ironies of his situation collect around him like reflections in dressing-room mirrors. His family's flight from the Nazis begins in 1938, on the eve of his bar mitzvah. Solly (played by a remarkable young actor, Marco Hofschneider) lands first in Lodz, Poland, and then in the Soviet Union, where he becomes a star pupil in a Communist school. After the Wehrmacht invades Russia and takes him prisoner, he reincarnates himself as an orphaned "pure" German, an Aryan child wandering in the barbaric eastern wilderness; as translator and mascot, he accompanies the German soldiers on their march through Russia. By the time he is initiated into the Hitler Youth, he has already run through several identities, and has proved himself capable of playing his roles with conviction and enthusiasm. We remain, however, constantly aware (as he is) of what his Nazi disguise conceals—his circumcised penis, the irreversible and unambiguous sign of his identity as a Jew. Holland uses this physical evidence of Solly's Jewishness as the fulcrum of the movie's delicately balanced narrative and moral tensions. She shows us the thoroughness of Nazi terror in the pained expression of a teen-age boy who doesn't dare allow himself to be seduced. In German and Russian.—T.R. (7/1/91) (Lincoln Plaza.)

La Femme Nikita—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center.)

Hot Shots!—"Good for a few laughs" may be the motto for the "Airplane!" college of film-making, but it applies literally to this sputtering spoof of military movies and commercials. The lampoons go all over the globe, in more ways than one. The director, Jim Abrahams, and his co-writer, Pat Proft (who also co-wrote "The Naked Gun 2½," with David Zucker), stab away at the myth of American and Hollywood know-how without proving their own competence at creating momentum or a solid comic personality. The maverick pilot played by Charlie Sheen isn't a magnetic parody figure. He simply stands in for an entire generation of male action stars who are also just stand-ins. And Abrahams' funny treatment of Second World War clichés doesn't mesh with his gloss on the MTV flyboy epic "Top Gun." His movie becomes part of the same junk-food chain as that glorified video game: the ad might as well read, "You've seen the original, you've bought the soundtrack, you've rented the cassette, now see the takeoff!" Co-starring Valeria Golino, Cary Elwes, Jon Cryer, the underused Bill Irwin and Lloyd Bridges, and Chihuahuas Jake and Elwood.—M.S. (34th St. East, Gotham Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Regency, and Criterion Center.)

At the Angelika Film Center, "Slacker"

101 Dalmatians (1961)—One of the few Disney animated features that please adults as much as children, this action comedy has loads of waggish charm. The plot is out of a horror film. As Cruella De Vil prepares ninety-nine young Dalmatians for the kill so she can make dogskin coats, you can't help thinking, "The Silence of the Pups." By telling the story from the perspective of Pongo and Perdita, parents of fifteen dognap victims, the Disney team turns it into a light-fantastic parody: a dog's-eye (or child's-eye) view of storybook Britain. Humans are "pets," and a country-wide canine corps takes over when agencies like Scotland Yard fail. Cruella has been justly celebrated for her Tallulah-from-Hell flair (Betty Lou Gerson contributes an arsenal of Bankhead-like snarls). But Pongo is every bit her match. He's a gallant, resourceful animal with surprising pockets of slyness and gaiety, and the crisp, virile voice of Rod Taylor. Headed by a blustery sheepdog colonel, a Kipling-esque trio of barnyard soldiers aid Pongo and Perdita. The small army of pups form a lovable composite character and a constantly changing sight gag. Trekking through a blizzard-blasted landscape, they're a cross between a canine caterpillar chain and a coal-flecked snowdrift. Bill Peet wrote the smart script, from Dodie Smith's book; Wolfgang Reitherman, Clyde Geronimi, and Hamilton S. Luske directed.—M.S. (Village East Cinemas, Murray Hill Cinemas, and Cinema 3rd Avenue. Matinées only.)

The Miracle—A beautiful new film by the Irish writer and director Neil Jordan ("Mona Lisa," "The Company of Wolves"). The setting is the coastal town of Bray, which is a short train ride from Dublin. Two teen-agers, Jimmy (Niall Byrne) and Rose (Lorraine Pilkington), spend most of their days wandering along the seaside promenade and making up stories about the people they run into: taking off from the human material that presents itself to them, the kids trade verbal riffs with the gleeful competitiveness of jamming musicians. One day, they spot a mysterious-looking blond woman (Beverly D'Angelo), and Jimmy becomes obsessed with her. He pursues her, in Bray and in Dublin, with an ardor that's partly sexual and partly something else—a feeling so muddled and inchoate that he can't put a name to it. Jordan turns this simple story into a clear, complete vision of experience: everything we see (and hear) flows into everything else, with an unpredictable rightness. The imagery draws on some pretty outré sources, and the climax—the miracle of the title—is a daring, flamboyant gesture. But Jordan manages to unite everything—the florid imagery, the dark emotional undertones, the flaky comedy, the astonishing physical beauty of the Irish seacoast—into a single, unbroken mood, a smooth arc connecting the past and the present, the familiar and the unforeseen. Also with Donal McCann. The cinematography, by Philippe Rousselot, is extraordinary.—T.R. (7/15/91) (Village East Cinemas. . . . ¶ Cinema 3rd Avenue. Evenings only.)

New Jack City—A Saturday night not-so-special, with juicy bits and pieces. Mario Van Peebles' primitive but energetic anti-drug melodrama stars Wesley Snipes as a self-made crack king, Ice-T and Judd Nelson as the cops who try to bring him down, and Van Peebles himself as their boss, modestly named Stone. The screenwriters, Thomas Lee Wright and Barry Michael Cooper, portray Snipes' charismatic villain as a brutal ghetto cousin of the eighties white-collar criminals. He believes that a man must "rob to get rich in the Reagan era." He also must extort and murder. In the most shocking sequence, Snipes turns an entire building into a crack apartment house. The narrative is a hash. With its combination of alienation and derring-do, "New Jack City" is like *Melvin* Van Peebles' "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" and Brian De Palma's "Scarface" (it contains clips from both) crossed with "Serpico" and earnest TV cops-and-robbers series. When the drug lord's romantic problems come to the fore, you wonder if you missed an episode. As a whole, the movie resembles sixties biker movies as well as seventies blaxploitation films: the camera keeps riding the action, and the cast is loose and entertaining.—M.S. (Public Theatre.)

Paris Is Burning—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballroom, some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery. Edited by Jonathan Oppenheim.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Film Forum, and Lincoln Plaza.)

Sorry, Wrong Number (1948)—Lucille Fletcher wrote this overextended treatment of her radio play about a bedridden hypochondriac who calls her husband at his office, overhears a couple of men arranging a murder, and slowly comes to realize that she is to be the victim. Barbara Stanwyck is the terrified and, finally, whimpering woman; Burt Lancaster is her morose husband. The director, Anatole Litvak, seems to be defeated by the extravagantly jumbled, shallow script. With Ann Richards.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Sept. 15.)

The Story of Adèle H. (1975)—A François Truffaut film to rank with "Shoot the Piano Player," "Jules and Jim," and "The Wild Child"—and perhaps his most passionate work. The picture is damnably intelligent—almost frighteningly so, like some passages in Russian novels which strip the characters bare. And it's deeply, disharmoniously funny—which Truffaut has never been before. The story, about romantic love fulfilled by self-destruction, is based on the journals of Adèle, the daughter of Victor Hugo; she's played by the prodigious young actress Isabelle Adjani. The visual consistency attained by the cinematographer, Nestor Almendros, enables Truffaut to achieve a new concentration on character. In French—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Sept. 18.)

Sunday Bloody Sunday (1971)—John Schlesinger directed this complex, remarkably modulated English movie about three Londoners and the breakup of two love affairs, from a delicate, pungent screenplay by Penelope Gilliatt, and it may be his finest work. It's an unusual film—perhaps a classic. A homosexual doctor in his forties, played by Peter Finch, and an employment counsellor in her thirties, played by Glenda Jackson, are both in love with a boyish, successful kinetic sculptor, played by Murray Head, who casually divides his time and affections between them. He has no special sexual preferences and doesn't understand what upsets the two older people about sharing him, since he loves them both. The film is a curious sort of plea on behalf of human frailty—it asks for sympathy for the non-heroes of life who make the best deal they can. People can receive solace from it—it's the most sophisticated weeper ever made. There is perhaps a little too *much* sensibility; compassion is featured. "People can manage on very little," the doctor says to relatives of an incapacitated patient. "Too late to start again," a sad, heavy-lidded woman who looks like Virginia Woolf says of her miserable marriage. Schlesinger has a gift for pacing and the energy to bring all the elements of a movie together, but he uses his technique so that it's just about impossible for you to have any reaction that he hasn't decreed you should. The film is full of planted insights; you can practically count the watts in the illuminations. With Peggy Ashcroft, Vivian Pickles, Tony Britton, and Maurice Denham. Cinematography by Billy Williams.—P.K. (Biograph Cinema; Sept. 12-14.)

Terminator 2: Judgment Day—The killer cyborg who was played by Arnold Schwarzenegger in the original "Terminator" (1984) has returned—only this time he's the hero. The first film, which was written and directed by James Cameron, is one of the genre-movie classics of the eighties: a lean, witty science-fiction movie without great pretensions to significance. The sequel, also written (with William Wisher) and directed by Cameron, is far less satisfying. The picture is full of spectacular action sequences and dazzling special effects, but the narrative doesn't have the snap of the original's: it's lumbering and monotonous, and it carries a heavy-handed anti-nuke message. The old, Schwarzenegger-model Terminator (the T-800) has been superseded by a more advanced model, the T-1000 (Robert Patrick), who is sleeker and more versatile. T-800, who represented the ultimate in destructive technology in the first film, seems almost human here: compared to T-1000, he's a vulnerable guy (or guyoid). The whole movie is based on the insane conceit that Arnold Schwarzenegger is the *underdog*. That's a stretch. Also with Linda Hamilton, Edward Furlong, and Joe Morton. Effects by Stan Winston and many, many others.—T.R. (7/29/91) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Truly, Madly, Deeply—A lovely, original comedy about a young woman, named Nina (Juliet Stevenson), who is obsessed with the memory of her dead lover. The writer and director, Anthony Minghella, establishes an unusual, delicately varied mood, and the film moves gracefully from a realistic mode into a fantastic one. One night, Nina's lover, Jamie (Alan Rickman), reappears in her flat, and his presence seems perfectly natural to us: he has emerged from a setting that is already charged with the heroine's feelings for him. Once he's back, she has to confront, in the most concrete way, what it would really mean to live the rest of her life with a dead guy as her significant other: the movie is less a ghost story than a weird kind of domestic comedy. Minghella draws us into a fresh and startlingly humane vision of modern urban life; the details of the heroine's way of living always seem to point beyond themselves, and there's an emotional unity to everything we see. Minghella writes dialogue that sounds casual but somehow takes us straight to the heart of his work's larger concerns, and he directs the actors beautifully. Rickman is unexpectedly romantic here, and very funny besides. And Stevenson gives a radiant performance: she doesn't have a false moment, or a boring one, in the whole picture. Cinematography by Remi Adefarasin. —T.R. (5/6/91) (Quad Cinema.)

Trust—This independent film by the young writer and director Hal Hartley ("The Unbelievable Truth") takes place entirely in a white, middle-class neighborhood in a forlorn-looking Long Island town. His Long Island is a bleak, featureless, neither-here-nor-there milieu. It's a place where anything can happen and almost nothing does—where parents and childen, living together in tight quarters, torment and negotiate with each other just to create some drama for themselves. In Hartley's world, moody ex-cons and earnest high-school girls are the only really interesting people around. This picture tells the story of the strange relationship—part romance, part tutorial, part vaudeville act—between a pair of suburban losers, Matthew (Martin Donovan) and Maria (Adrienne Shelly). He's a thirtyish, chain-smoking depressive who lives with his widowed father (John MacKay). She's an adolescent bimbo who, when she announces to her family and her boyfriend that she's pregnant, discovers that this persona isn't going to be much use to her; she decides that she has to change her life. The story moves by surprising leaps, with the rhythm of the main characters' erratic, uncertain progress toward an awareness of possibilities beyond their limited, cramped experience. Hartley is alert to the absurdities of their situation; he keeps the film's tone dry, and makes the threatening, pervasive nothingness of the milieu grotesquely funny. His style is a risky blend of formal abstraction and dramatic realism, and it demands resourceful actors. Donovan has a gangling, dishevelled charm, and his bummed-out line readings are superbly timed; and Shelly brings off Maria's transformation from teen-age temptress to serious young woman with extraordinary ease. Under Hartley's direction, they seem to be inventing an acting style for a brand-new genre: the existentialist comedy of manners. Also with Merritt Nelson, Edie Falco, and Gary Sauer.—T.R. (8/12/91) (Angelika Film Center.)

The Women (1939)—Clare Boothe Luce's ode to wisecracking cattiness, given the full, expensive M-G-M treatment in its first movie version. It confirms rich men's worst suspicions and fantasies of what women and (money) and what they're like when they're together (clawing beasties). With Rosalind Russell, Joan Crawford, Paulette Goddard, Joan Fontaine, Mary Boland, Marjorie Main, Hedda Hopper, Margaret Dumont, Virginia Grey, Virginia Weidler, Ruth Hussey, Phyllis Povah, Lucile Watson, and noble Norma Shearer, weeping, weeping. George Cukor directed—surprisingly coarsely; it's a kicking, screaming low comedy, with a quiet character such as Joan Fontaine coming across as a female wimp. Goddard is a standout—she's fun. And audiences at the time loved Russell's all-out burlesque of women as jealous bitches. Adapted by Anita Loos and Jane Murfin.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks, Sept. 13-14.)

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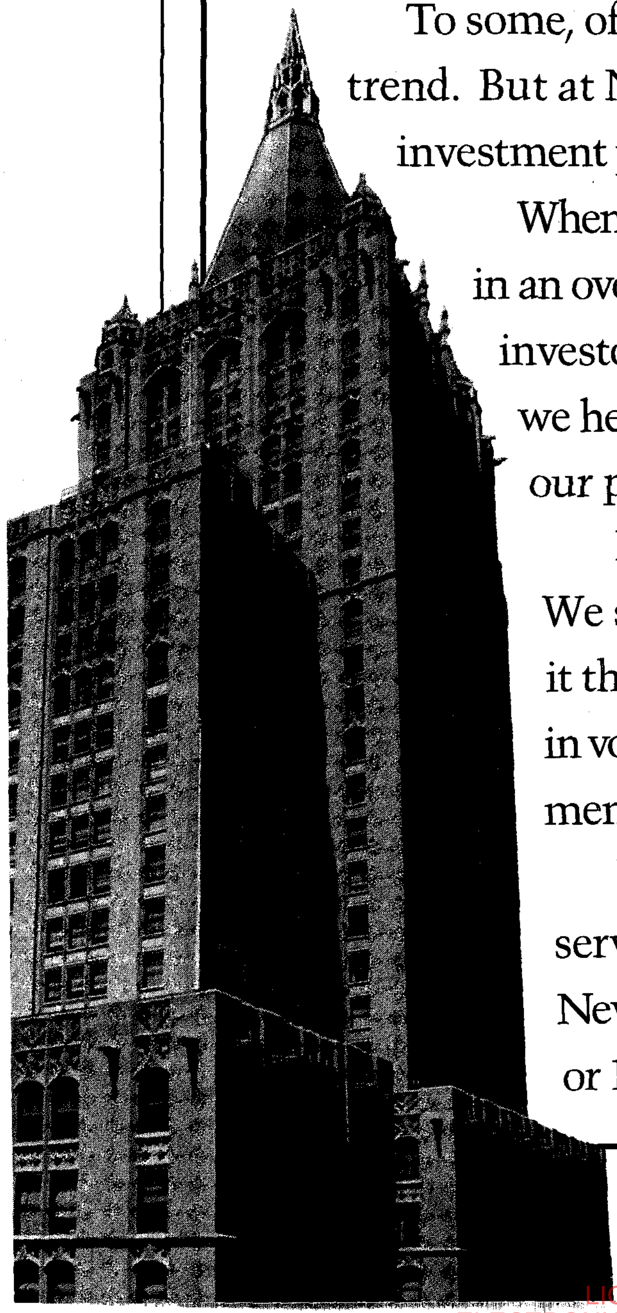

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THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

BRONX needles are yellow. The needles in Harlem are green. On the Lower East Side, the color is blue, and in Brooklyn it's red. Each of the needles is tinted with a painted-on enamel line, and about three thousand of them are distributed in these neighborhoods once a week by volunteers, who stand on street corners carrying red infectious-waste containers, and who are dressed in mufti in order to look unofficial and, as one volunteer puts it, "user friendly." The volunteers are members of the Needle Exchange Program, which is a committee of ACT UP, the AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power. Any adult who asks gets two or three free needles, along with a bleach kit to disinfect them, and condoms, and an informational packet explaining how AIDS is spread. It's well known by now that the surest form of transmission is through shared hypodermics, and somewhat less well known that infection among drug users and their sexual partners continues to rocket.

For each color-coded needle returned to ACT UP's volunteers, another is provided, on a one-to-one basis, up to fifteen at a time to any one person. Most people bring a few needles at a time. Right now, the return rate is between fifty and seventy per cent. The idea that addicts like to share needles, and passing around a used syringe is a sacred ritual of intravenous drug use, is a particularly hoary and durable myth. The fact is that hypodermic needles are expensive and hard to get. Last week, at the corner of Brook Avenue and 139th Street, in the South Bronx, an intersection that has sustained a thriving heroin trade for close to a quarter century, a needle cost two dollars. The price can vary, of course, and occasionally a dealer will get a big shipment of stolen needles and unload them cheap. Not long ago, a man was collared and taken to the Fortieth Precinct station house carrying three hundred needles. He'd been selling them for a buck apiece. But that was a rare bonanza for Brook Avenue.

As a rule, a user pays three dollars for clean works. When you add to that the cost of the drugs themselves, and when you consider the other props involved—a "cooker," usually a spoon or a bottle cap, for mixing heroin with water; a vial of liquid for flushing the needle; a belt or strap or length of rubber tubing to tie off a vein—shooting up gets complicated. "Junkies are balancing a lot," said a drug counsellor we know who was once a heroin addict. "A lot can go wrong. The assumption that they've got everything under control is crazy. Say you get the drug, you get the cooker, you need to shoot, and there's no syringe. Obviously, you're going to share." And when people share needles they also share what's in them: the residue and the drug adulterants and the dirt and the invisible traces of blood, and the likelihood—as high as seventy per cent—that that blood contains human-immunodeficiency virus.

FULL TIME
& PART TIME
SALES HELP
NEEDED
SOME FISH KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

Of the epidemics in this century, AIDS may be among the more controllable, since its spread is associated with behavior. The obvious way to modify behavior is through education, but in this kind of education the United States lags behind most of Europe, and even behind parts of the Third World. Maybe the lag comes from our puritan background, and maybe, as some people think, it comes from a malign disregard for the so-called risk populations on the part of our government. Who knows? But it seems more than passing strange that France and Germany and the Scandinavian countries and Catholic Mexico have ubiquitous poster campaigns promoting condom use, and that even the tiny Caribbean island of Dominica, where only fourteen AIDS deaths have been recorded, has seen fit to post large billboards counselling both safe sex and compassion for people with AIDS. Somehow, this is an idea that Americans have taken a while to accept. It wasn't long ago that addicts were considered non-people, as remote from the social contract as you could get. Intravenous-drug users didn't hold jobs, own property, or vote. Who ever heard of a constituency of addicts? Yet there are estimated to be two hundred thousand intravenous-drug users in New York City, and it's obvious that not all of them are nodding out on park benches. That addicts do hold jobs, own property, and vote still seems kind of surprising. It's less of a shock to learn that the rate at which they get AIDS and die of it is growing faster than that of any other group.

Grim as this seems, there have been some recent signs of hope. First, there was the acquittal, in June, of eight needle-exchange volunteers, most of whom were members of ACT UP. In open defiance of a local statute banning the possession of needles without a prescription, the eight were arrested last year preparing to pass out syringes on an Essex Street corner. The trial went on for six days. Among those who testified was Dr. Stephen Joseph, the former Health Commissioner of New York, who during his administration was a frequent ACT UP target. (His office was "occupied" more than once.) Under Joseph, the Health Department ran a short-lived needle-exchange pilot study for two hundred addicts, which required them to come to the Health Department itself to exchange needles. Now, testifying for the defense, Dr. Joseph made clear that what addicts want is discretion. They want ready access. They need to be targeted as a population for education about the transmission of HIV. What they need most, he seemed to suggest, is an invitation to save their own lives. Apparently, Laura Drager, the judge who heard the case, agreed. "The harm the defendants sought to avoid was greater than the harm in violating the statute," she said in her decision.

Then, at the beginning of August, Yale University and the New Haven Department of Health released a study showing that an eight-month-old experimental needle-exchange program in New Haven had led to an HIV-infection rate that was as much as thirty-three per cent lower than the rate observed among users who shared needles. "If you replace the needle, you're reducing the length of time the needle is in circulation," Edward H. Kaplan, an associate professor at Yale's School of Medicine, who devised the tracking system, told the *Times*. "It is by reducing the prevalence of HIV in circulating syringes that the incidence of new infections can be reduced." The Yale study was followed by a report from the National Commission on AIDS which criticized the Bush Administration's opposition to needle exchange. Dr. Don C. Des Jarlais, a member of the commission and the director of research at the Chemical Dependency Institute of Beth Israel Medical Center, in Manhattan, said there were "tens of studies that give evidence that needle-exchange programs work." There is no evidence, he added, that they increase drug use.

Still, that's one of the hitches. Many people, including Mayor Dinkins, have expressed fear that needle-exchange programs will just dump drug paraphernalia on minority communities. They fear the message sent to children by the sight of strangers passing out hypodermics on the block. And, of course, they fear having the government get into the drug business. These reasonable objections are outweighed by the fact that the AIDS epidemic is moving from street corners and from "freak houses," where people exchange sex for drugs, and from shooting galleries and rooftops to the drug users' sexual partners and often, through them, to new generations of children.

No one deserves AIDS, no matter how benighted his or her habits. And no one should be exposed to the disease, whether wittingly or not, when there is a way to stop exposure. Mayor Dinkins has asked Acting Health Commissioner Dr. Margaret Hamburg to study the Yale-New Haven program to see if a similar one might work in New York, and there are reports that several community-based groups are ready to sponsor needle exchange and are just waiting for the Mayor's go-ahead. Meanwhile, in the South Bronx people are doing what they've always done. On Brook Avenue last week, half a block from a public school, several dealers sold Blue Thunder heroin to a group of five addicts, and the five immediately repaired to nearby St. Mary's Park and shot up. Having only two needles among them, they shared.

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Night and Day

A FRIEND writes:

I often have trouble sleeping in the city during summer nights—you know, the heat, the sirens, the bottles smashing in the street—but lately I've been tossing for other reasons. It's because my wife and I recently returned from Qaanaaq, a village in the north of Greenland. I mean way north: Qaanaaq is as far north of New York as New York is north of the Amazon River. You could say that we are suffering from a sort of jet lag, except that we didn't change time zones so much as leave them altogether. We knew before we started out that in the high Arctic the summer sun circles the horizon without dipping beneath it; what we didn't know was that people up there pretty much ignore the difference between night and day. It makes sense for them to do that, because there really *isn't* a difference. But my wife and I were befuddled: we felt that the way we brick together our lives down here, out of tidy little blocks of time, had been subverted.

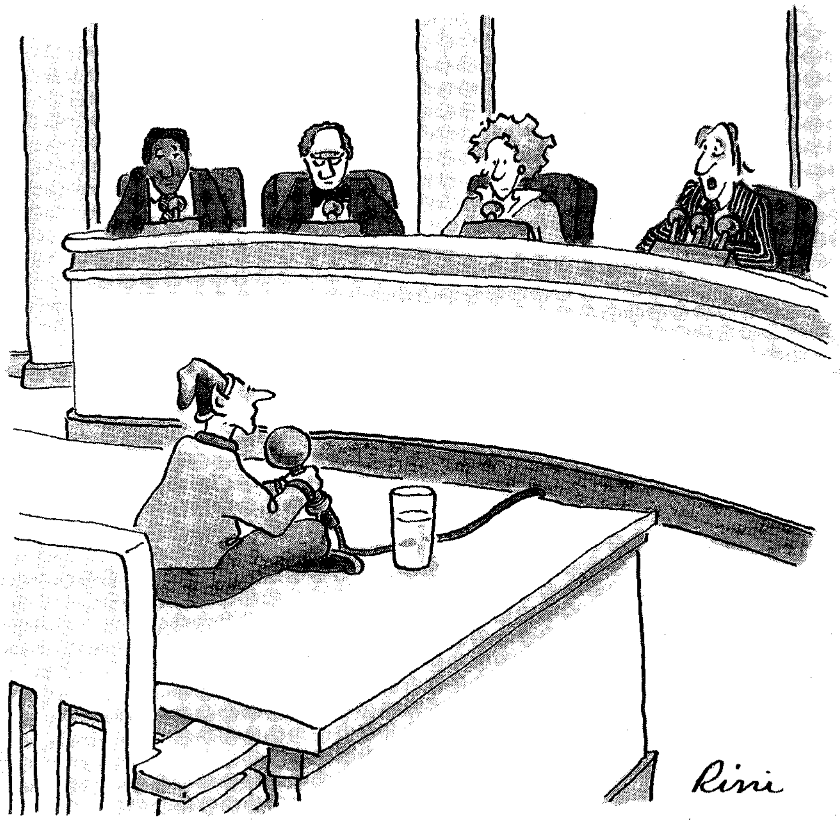
At first, we tried to cling to a regular schedule, as if unable to let go of the scaffolding of day and night. We would be standing in bright sunshine on the tundra and find ourselves saying things to each other like "Well, it's almost eleven-thirty. Maybe we should go to bed." We'd crawl into our tent a little sheepishly, as if we'd sent ourselves to bed without supper. From the village, down the hill, we could hear people talking, music playing, dogs howling. Qaanaaq, I should add, is a collection of a hundred-odd steep-roofed houses and shacks on the edge of a fjord, and resembles a Nordic fishing village. It belongs to Denmark, like the rest of Greenland, and is the main community of the so-called Polar Eskimos, the world's farthest-north people. It's the only place I've ever visited where the soccer field is not manicured turf but, instead, a frozen rectangle marked off each spring on sea ice.

It was by necessity—in the Arctic, everything is by necessity, rather than by the clock—that my wife and I began to ignore our digital watches. We went out by dogsled onto the sea ice, which doesn't completely leave the fjord until the end of July, and a blizzard pinned us in our tent for two days; we had little choice but to follow the example of our Inuit guides, and simply sleep, eat, and then sleep some more. I felt as if we were hibernating, storing sleep to last through the long stretches of sun-filled wakefulness to follow. We snoozed deep into the dusky afternoons while the north wind pelted snowflakes against the tent fabric. That blizzard, incidentally, occurred around the Fourth of July; we thought of you down here with your parades, your corn on the cob, your fireworks.

A few days later, the weather turned sunny and pleasant. ("Warm" would be an exaggeration; we could still see our breath.) Because some of the ice had broken, we were able to travel by small motorboat to a tiny hunting village, and it put yet another crimp in our notion of time. The village sits on the north slope of Herbert Island, an exposure that affords it the brightest light during the hours when the sun lumbers around to the north—from about midnight until early morning. These are the hours when the village of Herbert Island hops. It seemed as if we had emerged into a separate pocket of time—one that was turned inside out. At 2 A.M., a dozen visiting relatives were sitting in the sun outside our guide's house, playing cards, sipping tea, and chatting by walkie-talkie with friends in neighboring villages. It might have been a midday family gathering in Omaha, except that they sat on crates instead of chaise longues, and the bleached bones of walrus and seal lay strewn about the ground.

My wife and I gave ourselves over to the hang-loose spirit of the place, and felt at first as if we were playing hooky. In taking on our guide, Mamarut, we had joined up with a kind of Arctic Huck Finn, who was always heading out on expeditions at the most unpredictable moments. We'd wait around and wait around, and suddenly—bang!—we'd jump into a boat to go auk hunting, say, or to fetch a dog team from another island. The time was right—not time as we know it but time measured by the dropping of the wind or the turning of the tide or the opening of a passage between ice floes. The clock that hung on Mamarut's wall read like an out-of-date calendar.

We lapsed into a dreamy, disconnected, sunlit state, for nothing ever happened to call our attention to the passage of time: no ticks or tocks, no beepers, buzzers, bells—nothing except the slow perforation of the remaining sea ice by the growing warmth of the sun. The black-and-white flipping back and forth of day and night had receded to an abstraction, and darkness itself seemed a foreign land—sticky, enveloping, full of cricket chirps and crawly things—that existed far to the south. Tangled up with it somewhere down there was my concept of time, which appeared now as a sort of central switchboard with cables trailing out into darkness. It blinked red and green with traffic lights, blue with flashes from the tops of emergency vehicles, red with the thousand coils of a building full of toasters, all of them popping up in unison with a penetrating "*Kling!*"



"I think what this committee wants to know is whether or not the situation at the end of the rainbow can be sustained without a bailout."

• •

It was with some embarrassment that my wife and I finally told Mamarut that we "had to" go, because we "had to" catch the twice-weekly helicopter out of Qaanaaq. This rigid verbal construction seemed attached to a long, metallic claw that was suddenly reaching up from the south to seize us. When the tide was right and the ice floes separated, Mamarut obligingly motored us to the mainland. We saw our first tree when we changed planes at Ottawa, our first darkness in Boston, where we changed again. It pushed in against the glass walls of the airport lobby like a soft, thick quilt. Now that we're back home, it seems very important to sleep regular hours. The thing is, we're no longer sure exactly why.

Reconstruction

IN an airless room at the Thirty-fourth Street Y, about forty mostly middle-aged men assemble on the third Saturday of every month to advance the cause of discographic scholarship. Their faces have the unmistakable pallor of the white male indoor hobbyist, and a few look as if they had risen from hospital beds to attend. They are faithful members of the Record Research Associates, an informal, untucked-shirt kind of organization whose interests lie chiefly in the technical history of the record business: copyrights, patents, pressings (where, when, how many), release dates, and matrix numbers—those digits and letters scratched in the runoff grooves which identify a particular recording session and a particular take. The R.R.A. has been meeting, in various spots around the city (members' homes, the CBS Building, the Prince George Hotel), since 1952. A meeting typically lasts all day, and when we visited one the other Saturday the morning session was slow and easy. On metal tables lining the room some members had set out boxes of LPs, 78s in paper sleeves, and some stray CDs and cassettes, and people were sidling from table to table, swapping material and carrying on learned discographic conversations.

Around noon, the arrival of Leonard Kunstadt, one of the founding members, gave the room a jolt of energy. As the editor of the almost bi-monthly magazine *Record Research*—a separate but sympathetic entity—Mr. Kunstadt is a celebrity in this circle. In his pockets he keeps a generous supply of scrap paper and old envelopes, and as soon as he walked in he began making notes. Both his written and his spoken sentences often end in exclamation points, and his anecdotes often take a while to unravel, as parentheses get trapped within other parentheses.

Before the afternoon session, Mr. Kunstadt and his friend Mike Zaccagnino took us out for a slice of pizza. Both men are in their mid-sixties, and they go back a long way together. They spoke with awe about those members of R.R.A. who over the years have dug out the buried history of extinct record companies like Gennett, Vocalion, Emerson, and Black Swan. For many years, the task of reconstructing the details of recording's early years was left to groups like the R.R.A.; the companies themselves couldn't be bothered. Independent, unpaid research by Mr. Kunstadt's "discographical scientists" stands behind the current movement to reissue vintage material. Mr. Kunstadt reserves his highest praise for colleagues he calls "statistics men," such as the late Perry Armagnac, an editor at *Popular Science*, and the late Carl Kendziora, an accountant, who together came up with endless details about well over a thousand dance-music titles on Perfect, a record label owned by Pathé in the nineteen-twenties and thirties. "Going by the catalogue numbers, the entire fourteen-thousand series and on into the fifteen-thousand series—can you imagine that?" he said. "Including alternate takes and all kinds of dovetailing information!"

"Perry didn't care what music was on there," Mr. Zaccagnino said. "He was only interested in numbers."

"He was quiet but deadly," Mr. Kunstadt said.

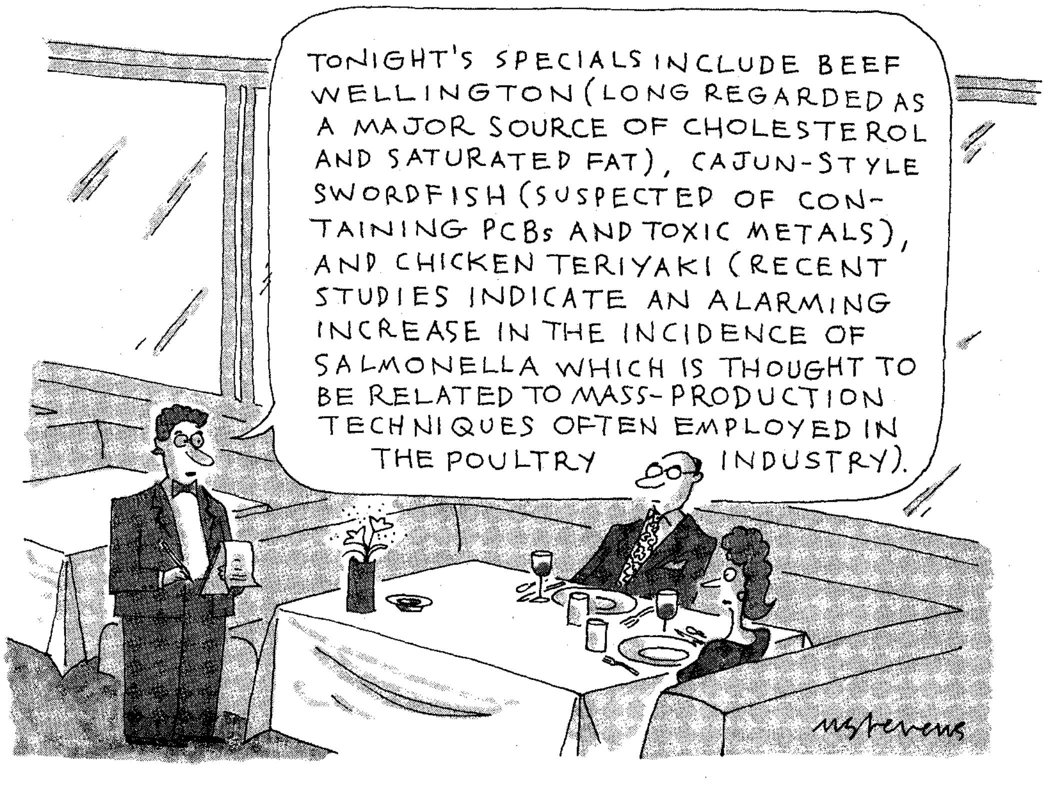
Record Research shows the same spirit. Crammed with homemade ads for books and for other magazines promoting discographic research, each issue has page after page of auction listings; with bids starting at fifty cents, you can buy records by Count Basie, Ernestine Schumann-Heink, or the Associated Glee Club of America. Subscriptions (five dollars for five issues) and the auctions keep the enterprise afloat, but it's a low-profit, mainly-for-the-love-of-it product, legible only with the aid of a magnifying glass.

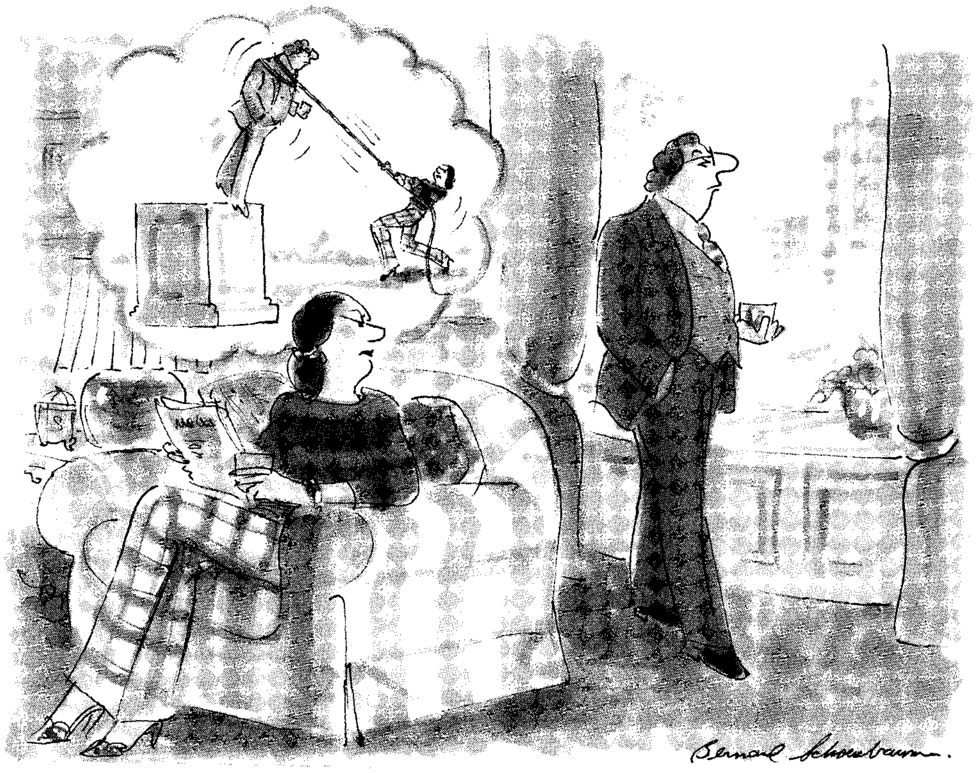
"We have the most devoted readers in the world," Mr. Kunstadt said, and he pointed out that copies of *Record Research* could be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale and in the National Library of Australia, in Canberra.

When we returned from lunch, the boxes of records had been put away, and chairs had been arranged to face a table at one end of the room, where a guest speaker, the jazz trombonist Eddie Bert, was telling stories about the parsimonious Benny Goodman, the unswinging Stan Kenton, and the one-of-a-kind Thelonious Monk. Musicians with memories as sharp and travels as varied as Mr. Bert's are hard to come by. Soon the members were happily firing questions at him about dates and personnel, and Mr. Bert seemed able to remember everything about dozens of bands going back more than fifty years. After he rattled off the exact time of a big-band rehearsal with Charlie Parker, there was an incredulous silence. "I know because in a photograph I took that day the clock on the wall says four-fifteen," he explained. The audience applauded and Mr. Bert smiled, as though each had justified the other's existence.

Here's a Story

When we caught up with Cindy Brady, she was in Chicago, drinking a beer and smoking a cigarette. This was not the original Cindy Brady; it was the Annoyance Theatre's stand-in, a twenty-seven-year-old actress named Susan Messing. The new Cindy was wearing the trademark baby-doll dress and blond pigtails, but she was stretched out on a rooftop beach chair and was trying to explain why she and the rest of the cast of "The Real Live Brady Bunch" have become folk heroes in Chicago, where the show just finished a fourteen-month engagement. "Our whole generation related to 'The Brady Bunch' in an intimate way," she said. "There was a character for everyone: three boys and three girls. It was a simple question of pick and match. I can give you an example of how this still goes on. Tom Hanks came to see us one night with his young daughter. After the performance was over, the little girl, who had never seen the real show, latched on to me right away, be-


TONIGHT'S SPECIALS INCLUDE BEEF WELLINGTON (LONG REGARDED AS A MAJOR SOURCE OF CHOLESTEROL AND SATURATED FAT), CAJUN-STYLE SWORDFISH (SUSPECTED OF CONTAINING PCBs AND TOXIC METALS), AND CHICKEN TERIYAKI (RECENT STUDIES INDICATE AN ALARMING INCREASE IN THE INCIDENCE OF SALMONELLA WHICH IS THOUGHT TO BE RELATED TO MASS-PRODUCTION TECHNIQUES OFTEN EMPLOYED IN THE POULTRY INDUSTRY).



cause I'm supposedly eight. We came up to the roof here and talked about the kids in her class."

The roof in question was that of the show's North Side theatre, where the cast members had gathered for a send-off party before leaving for New York and an open-ended engagement at the Village Gate. The actors, all of them still in costume, milled about, telling stories and dancing. Joe Bill, who plays Sam the Butcher, worked the keg.

"Our show's not a serious thing," Ms. Messing went on. "There's a tendency to get too thinky about it. It's popular because the Bradys seem ridiculous now. Mike Brady is an architect, yet three kids share a bedroom. Surely there's a paradox here."

"The Real Live Brady Bunch" takes the worn-out themes and characters of "The Brady Bunch" out of their normal rerun context and brings them before a live and often rowdy audience, which shares them like embarrassing memories. Most of the crowd are Bradyphiles and will gladly recite whole scenes upon request. For many, when the last Brady episode ran in 1974, it was as if a steel door had slammed shut. Now, when the cast breaks into a raucous version of "It's a Sunshine Day," from the Silver Platters episode, the audience reacts as if it had been reunited with a long-lost friend; when Marcia is hit in the face with a football, the audience's joy can hardly be contained.

"Some of the absurdity arises from the fact that it's adults who play these scenes," Ms. Messing told us. "There's something weird about seeing a grown woman in pigtails, carrying a Kitty Karry-All doll around. It's also sort of mind-blowing that the show ran in the early seventies—that the Vietnam War and 'The Brady Bunch' shared an era." She shook her head then, reconsidering the show's relation to its era. "Maybe it can be read historically," she decided, recalling an episode in which Cindy is harassed by a bully called Buddy Hinton. "Buddy Hinton was like the Soviet Union at the time—pure evil—and Mike Brady symbolized a patriotic America, advising us to talk first but fight if we must."

While it remains to be seen how the show will be received in New York, the Chicago theatre that housed the production became a shrine. The fans reverence resulted from the show's authenticity: the scenes are exact replicas of the originals, down to a canned-laugh track. Jill Soloway, who developed the show, transcribed twenty entire episodes from videotapes, and the actors used these scripts to reconstruct the TV show as accurately as possible.

One actor who has the advantage of actually looking like her character is Mari Weiss, who plays Alice, the Bradys' middle-aged housekeeper. Not being a family member, Alice had unique insight into the Bradys, for, no matter how close she got, she remained an outsider—the only character with a downstairs bedroom. Ms. Weiss has a similar perspective on the "Real Live Brady Bunch" phenomenon, and it has led her to reëvaluate the original Brady family. "There were six kids living in two connecting rooms, and the boys and girls weren't related," she said. "What do you think went on when the lights went out? As for Alice and Sam the Butcher, they were in their forties and supposedly involved in a platonic relationship. Do you buy that?" She paused a minute, and then said, "I always felt for Alice, because I hated those girls. They were pretty blondes, and back then I was a chubby brunette with braces. And I'll tell you something else. Since I've been playing Alice, I've come to empathize with her. When she showed up at that Brady reunion"—a TV special that was broadcast last year on CBS—"the attitude of the kids was 'Alice, what are *you* doing here?' In the next scene, she was in the background, sweeping. She was the maid again."

If Alice was the perennial outsider, Jan was the ultimate insider—the middle child, sandwiched between cute Cindy and stunning Marcia. "I really didn't know how to play her," said her Chicago counterpart, Melanie Hutsell, who was seated on the far side of the roof deck. "There's really not much there, but I think I finally found the essence of Jan, and now people say, 'Oh, *that's* what Jan was all about—she was really just miserable and full of angst.' " Ms. Hutsell was wearing a sleeveless striped shirt, circa 1972, and green bell-bottoms. The uncanny Jan-ness she had achieved was undermined only by her accent. (She's from Knoxville, Tennessee, and speaks with a drawl; the Bradys lived in California, and sounded like it.) "You really can't learn anything from this production," she said, "except that people have a special place in their hearts for 'The Brady Bunch.' "

Ms. Messing, who had wandered over from her beach chair, was less philosophical. "Even now, my breasts are strapped down," she said.

OFF-RAMP

I USED to speak the language of the patriarchy.

Rick, my stepfather, taught me Latin names for all the bones in his right foot. When I helped my first boyfriend with his high-school homework, he insisted I do it in baby talk.

And then there was Lyle. He came into the Carl's Jr. that Rick and my mom run near Flagstaff, Arizona, one day in late August. All summer we fed tourists after they were Grand Canyoned out. Hundreds—*thousands*—of exhausted, screaming kids and their zombified parents. I was nineteen. Lyle was sitting alone that afternoon, staring at me while I loaded French-fry bags.

"Tell that creep he's got to give up his table," Rick said. "He's been there fifteen minutes."

I went over to where Lyle was lounging. "My stepdad thinks it's impolite to digest your food," I told him.

Lyle looked deep into my eyes. "Doreen," he said, reading my nameplate. "I have news for you, Doreen. You are not who you think you are. You are not a fast-food server—you are an inspiration from the divine. You have made me want to create again."

"I have?" I said. "Are you an artist?"

"I could be," he said, "if you would be my muse." He paused and played with his straw. "Do you know what a muse is?" I shook my head. "A muse is a woman who makes it possible for a guy to carry out his life's work. But muses don't have names like Doreen."

He stood up and left. I ran after him.

"Then who am I?" I asked in the parking lot.

"Henceforth," he said, "you shall be Rawnee." He spelled it in the dust on his van.

I'D never been with anyone who lived for his art before. The people I knew all picked up after themselves. But Lyle couldn't function without me. And I thought I was discovering capabilities in myself I hadn't known were there, like paying bills.

We went through my junior-college savings fund in two weeks.

One night Lyle drove off without saying anything. I was terrified that he wouldn't come back, that he'd find another muse. At 3 A.M. he returned, carrying a huge cardboard box. "All the really creative people have to be subsidized," he explained. He knifed open the carton. Clothing labels spilled out onto the shag carpeting of the tiny house we were renting. "You and me are about to get a little grant from Mack Ropington," he said.

It was at the height of the Western-wear craze, and everyone was splurging on Ropington's designer clothes and furnishings. I knew that what we were about to do was wrong and, worse, that I could end up in jail.

"Do you think what *Ropington's* doing is right?" Lyle asked. "Making people think they're cowboys because they're wearing his hundred-dollar jeans or sleeping under his five-hundred-dollar horse blankets?"

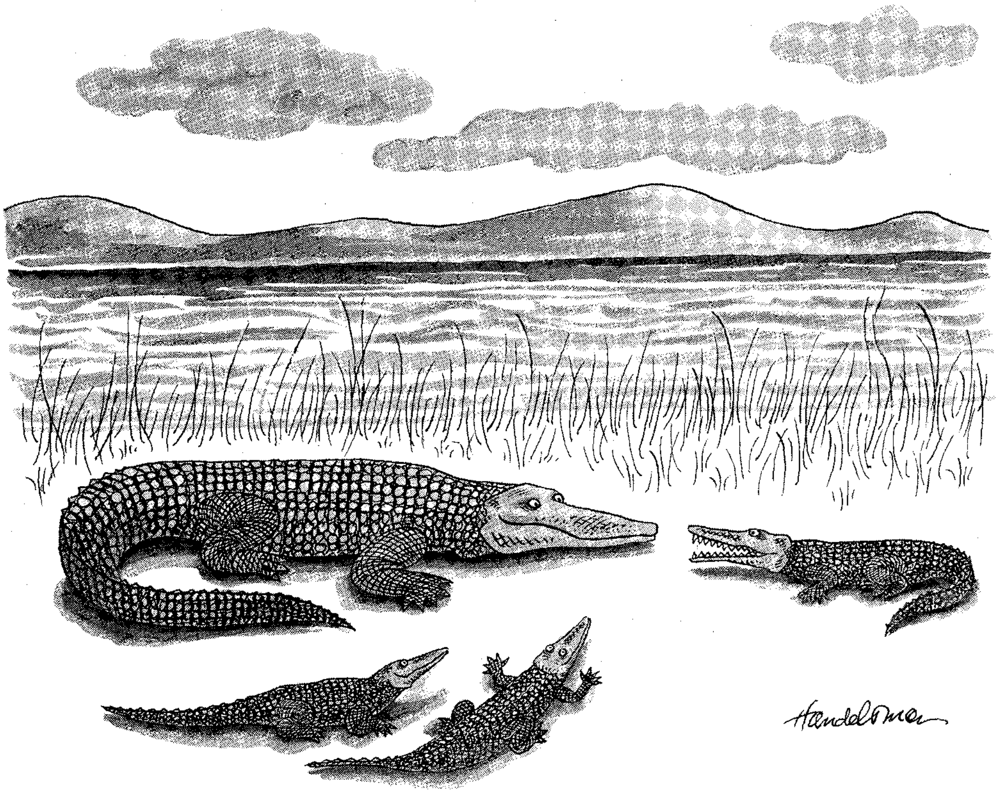
"No, but—"

"I thought you loved me," Lyle said.

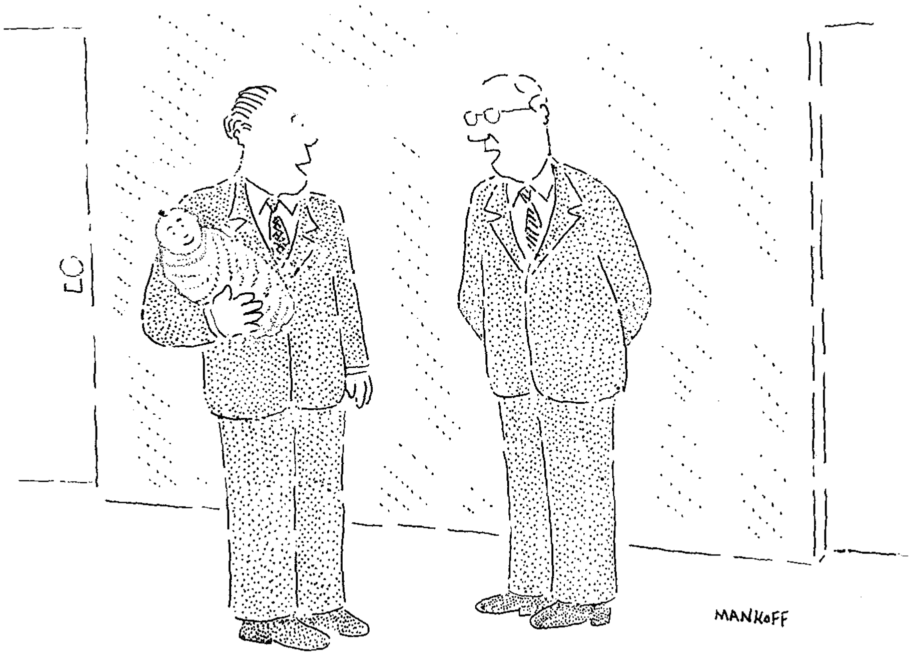
So, the next day I got up before dawn and drove out into the Verde Valley. I met up with my contact on a dirt road full of potholes. I paid him for his trunkful of men's cotton briefs—they were the kind you'd buy at K mart. Then I sat in my car and sewed in the tags. When I finished, it was 8 A.M., time to drive over to the Sedona off-ramp and set up shop. That day I cleared $169.52.

I was always selling something different. Sometimes it was ties, sometimes shirts, sometimes pillowcases, pot holders, or mittens. Whatever my supplier could get—and I never asked how. People would stop their cars to buy it as long as it said Ropington.

MY new career had its downside, too. I often had to change locations to avoid getting caught. And later, when the recession hit, the tourists started keeping their disposable income for vacation essentials such as motel childcare.



"Tell us again about Bogie and Hepburn coming up the river."



"What d'ya think, Boss?"

"Adorable, Dobson, but baby pictures will suffice from now on."

• •

Lyle, however, was *always* having a hard time. "How can I create art when the world's so messed up?" he said one night. I was sitting on the bed, sewing labels into imitation-leather aprons. "I should be out making a difference," he said. "I should go leave tire tracks on the front lawn of the White House to let them know what I think of their energy policies."

"Lyle," I said, "you have to make things better where you can. And no improvement is too small."

He thought about this. "You're right, Rawnee," he said. "While you're doing that, take off your clothes."

"*Lyle*," I said, "I'm *working*." But I never could refuse him.

"The world's a better place already," he said.

ASTRA says that men have separated themselves from nature, and that's why in these last few years of this millennium Lyle can't create.

I was going to goddess therapy. I saw the ad for it in our newspaper. "Find the Power of Inspiration Within—Let the Muse Speak to *You*," it said. I was sure this was what I needed to help Lyle.

We met every Tuesday evening at the public library, because it was over the strongest power vortex in our town. Unfortunately, the library closed that spring for lack of funding. We then got together at the Denny's on 89, which is on top of the second-strongest power vortex.

"This Astra is taking advantage of you," Lyle said. "She is leading you on, Rawnee, when she says that you can create art. Let me tell you, not everyone can create art. Even if you're an artist, it doesn't mean you can create art."

"Astra says that if you connect with the feminine you will achieve wholeness, and then you will create."

"Rawnee," he said, "the kind of wildness *I* need to create art is matched pairs of socks in my drawer, and a refrigerator full of food. You've been neglecting things around here, especially me."

ASTRA felt I had it in me to perform my own ritual. I was nervous. The rituals that the other wo-men had created were *so* impressive! One sat for three days in our local river. Another shaved her head and ate mud.

"Stop thinking and it will come to you," Astra said.

It was while I was selling at the Canyon de Chelly on-ramp that I had a revelation about what form my ritual must take. I phoned all the wo-men and invited them over to our house. Lyle was furious when I made him leave.

"I'm interested in getting in touch with my primordial wo-maness-ness," I announced. It was a suffocatingly hot July night. "So I'm going to turn off the air-conditioner."

We sweltered together for an hour, and then Astra spoke. "I don't mean to be hierarchical or anything," she said to me, "but I think you can do better."

SEPTEMBER 10TH was a particularly bad day for me. My 5 A.M. contact could only get abalone shells. It took me forever to paste the Ropington tags into them. Then drivers just slowed down at the Moenkopi off-ramp and eyed me suspiciously. They didn't stop.

By noon I'd developed a halfway decent sales pitch. "Mack Ropington says the era of the West he's gaining the most inspiration from these days is when it was all underwater," I'd say. Not one sale.

Early that afternoon, a colleague set up beside me. I recognized him from various junctions and cloverleafs where he'd always dressed in old miner's gear. Now, he was wearing mirror shades, a poncho, and braids.

My heart sank when he propped up a dozen paintings on velvet. Sure enough, a man in an Infiniti screeched to a stop. He pointed to a picture of a chief offering a scalp to a naked squaw. "I really go for the Native American philosophy of life," the Infiniti man said.

"That's five per cent off the asking price for not calling us Indians," my competition said.

I got home around nine. All I wanted was to go straight to bed. When I opened the door, I didn't recognize my home. The furniture had been totally rearranged. And a woman I'd never seen before was draping herself on the couch *I'd* purchased.

"Who are you?" I demanded.

"Calm down," she said. "Nothing happened. Lyle and I are exploring the spiritual side of our relationship."

Lyle strolled into the room. He

AUTHORS MUST BE WITH THEIR AGENTS!

didn't say as much as hello to me.

"What's going on?" I said.

"Rawnee," he said, "meet Tawnee."

"Lyle," she whined, "I think it's time we advanced to touching. I'm getting achy in my shoulders from all the tension in the air."

He looked at me and sighed. "It's damn hard to be an artist in this house. On top of all *your* questions, now I have to give *her* a *massage*."

At that, I started packing my things.

When Lyle saw I was serious about leaving, he blocked the front door. "Rawnee," he said. "You can't abandon me. You know how much you mean to me. You are the air that gives me life, the water that sustains me— "

"And the earth you walk all over," I said.

I NEEDED a ritual that would transform my hurt into a mighty but sensitive sword. I drove high into the mesas with Astra and the others. We left our vehicles behind and climbed up a rock and into a cave. There we swept aside the used condoms and beer bottles.

"Let the wind and sky speak to you," Astra told me.

I tried.

"What are they saying?"

"I'm not sure," I said.

"You're thinking again," she said. "Don't think. Deep within you is the power to understand."

I listened again. This time I heard their voices.

"Forget that jerk," the voices said.

I HAVE left Rawnee behind, and I have no more need of Mack Ropington's name. I am Superba now, and I have my own resonant image.

TWO cars pull up to my stand. "Hey, that's you, isn't it?" The man in the white Bronco says. He casts his eyes on my wares: photos of me printed on T-shirts. "I'll take three of the ones with you topless."

The other driver gets out of his Hyundai. "Excuse me," he says. "Did I hear you say 'topless'? This is not a T-shirt with a photo on it of a topless woman. This is a T-shirt with a photo on it of a woman who has chosen to bare her breasts." This man turns to me. "I'm Coe," he says. "I'm white, I'm male, I'm heterosexual, and I'm sorry."

"I'm Superba," I tell him. "And I need to exorcise some submission forces arising in me upon meeting a man after being single for three months. I need to do this in a context in which I still honor my own power. So this is how it's going to be—you will pick a restaurant, drive us there, and pay for dinner."

WE are travelling along a winding mountain road. He relates the story of his quest to attain a genuine PMS state. His Hyundai begins to sputter. Moments later, we are out of gas.

Coe bursts into tears. "This is a metaphor for how the patriarchy's breaking down and me with it!" He clutches me and sobs. "Show me the way, Superba."

"Well," I say, "one of the first things I do when I get in a car is look at the gas gauge."

"You're a woman warrior!" he cries. He straightens up. "I've been reading Carl Jung. He says a man is nothing until he meets his anima. Please be my feminine principle and help me become whole again."

I pull him to me and kiss him.

"Wow," he says. "The way you're in charge of your sexuality is devastating to my male ego. But it's the only chance our planet has."

I kiss him again. Together we acknowledge the presence of nature. Snow is falling. The road is dark, and it doesn't appear likely that automobiles will pass by.

"What do we do now?" he asks.

"One of us must seek out a twenty-four-hour filling station and return with some gas."

"I lost my intuitive powers when my Fathers colonized your sex," he says. "We'll be doomed if *I* try to find one."

"You're right," I say. "You must stay here." I gather my purse, put on my jacket, and look over at Coe. He is trembling; there are holes in his sweater. The sight of him expressing his true male helplessness summons forth my inner voices. As Astra has taught me, I listen to them. "Remove your own parka and tuck it around him," the voices say.

I obey, then open the car door and step out. "You're my kind of goddess," he calls out from inside. "Hurry back."

The snow crunches under my sneakers. I am shivering, but that will pass. For I am the strong one.

—POLLY FROST

EMERGENCY

I'D been working in the emergency room for about three weeks, I guess. This was in 1973, before the summer ended. With nothing to do on the overnight shift but batch the insurance reports from the daytime shifts, I just started wandering around, over to the coronary-care unit, down to the cafeteria, et cetera, looking for Georgie, the orderly, a pretty good friend of mine. He often stole pills from the cabinets.

He was running over the tiled floor of the operating room with a mop. "Are you still doing that?" I said.

"Jesus, there's a lot of blood here," he complained.

"Where?" The floor looked clean enough to me.

"What the hell were they doing in here?" he asked me.

"They were performing surgery, Georgie," I told him.

"There's so much goop inside of us, man," he said, "and it all wants to get out." He leaned his mop against a cabinet.

"What are you crying for?" I didn't understand.

He stood still, raised both arms slowly behind his head, and tightened his ponytail. Then he grabbed the mop and started making broad random arcs with it, trembling and weeping and moving all around the place really fast. "What am I *crying* for?" he said. "Jesus. Wow, oh boy, perfect."

I WAS hanging out in the E.R. with fat, quivering Nurse. One of the Family Service doctors that nobody liked came in looking for Georgie to wipe up after him. "Where's Georgie?" this guy asked.

"Georgie's in O.R.," Nurse said

"Again?"

"No," Nurse said. "Still."

"Still? Doing what?"

"Cleaning the floor."

"Again?"

"No," Nurse said again. "Still."

BACK in O.R., Georgie dropped his mop and bent over in the posture of a child soiling its diapers. He stared down with his mouth open in terror.

He said, "What am I going to do about these fucking *shoes*, man?"

"Whatever you stole," I said, "I guess you already ate it all, right?"

"Listen to how they squish," he said, walking around carefully on his heels.

"Let me check your pockets, man."

He stood still a minute, and I found his stash. I left him two of each, whatever they were. "Shift is about half over," I told him.

"Good. Because I really, really, really need a drink," he said. "Will you please help me get this blood mopped *up*?"

AROUND 3:30 A.M. a guy with a knife in his eye came in, led by Georgie.

"I hope *you* didn't do that to him," Nurse said.

"Me?" Georgie said. "No. He was like this."

"My wife did it," the man said. The blade was buried to the hilt in the outside corner of his left eye. It was a hunting knife kind of thing.

"Who brought you in?" Nurse said.

"Nobody. I just walked down. It's only three blocks," the man said.

Nurse peered at him. "We'd better get you lying down."

"O.K., I'm certainly ready for something like that," the man said.

She peered a bit longer into his face.

"Is your other eye," she said, "a glass eye?"

"It's plastic, or something artificial like that," he said.

"And you can see out of *this* eye?" she asked, meaning the wounded one.

"I can see. But I can't make a fist out of my left hand because this knife is doing something to my brain."

"My God," Nurse said.

"I guess I'd better get the doctor," I said.

"There you go," Nurse agreed.

They got him lying down, and Georgie says to the patient, "Name?"

"Terrence Weber."

"Your face is dark. I can't see what you're saying."

"Georgie," I said.

"What are you saying, man? I can't see."

Nurse came over, and Georgie said to her, "His face is dark."

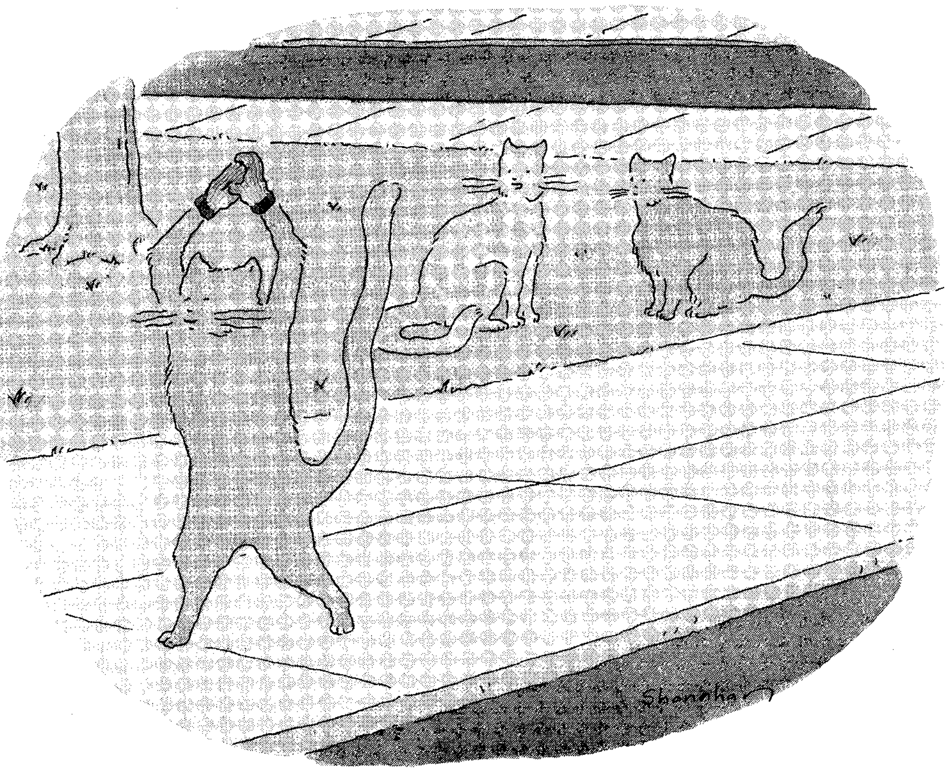
She leaned over the patient. "How long ago did this happen, Terry?" she shouted down into his face.

"Just a while ago. My wife did it. I was asleep," the patient said.

"Do you want the police?"

He thought about it and finally said, "Not unless I die."

Nurse went to the wall intercom and buzzed the doctor on duty, the Family Service person. "Got a surprise



"He may have found his mittens, but he's lost all sense of propriety."

for you," she said over the intercom. He took his time getting down the hall to her, because he knew she hated Family Service and her happy tone of voice could only mean something beyond his competence and potentially humiliating.

He peeked into the trauma room and saw the situation: the clerk—that is, me—standing next to the orderly, Georgie, both of us on drugs, looking down at a patient with a knife sticking up out of his face.

"What seems to be the trouble?" he said.

THE doctor gathered the three of us around him in the office and said, "Here's the situation. We've got to get a team here, an entire team. I want a good eye man. A great eye man. The best eye man. I want a brain surgeon. And I want a really good gas man, get me a genius. I'm not touching that head. I'm just going to watch this one. I know my limits. We'll just get him prepped and sit tight. Orderly!"

"Do you mean me?" Georgie said. "Should I get him prepped?"

"Is this a hospital?" the doctor asked. "Is this the emergency room? Is that a patient? Are you the orderly?"

I dialled the hospital operator and told her to get me the eye man and the brain man and the gas man.

Georgie could be heard across the hall, washing his hands and singing a Neil Young song that went "Hello cowgirl in the sand. Is this place at your command?"

"That person is not right, not at all, not one bit," the doctor said.

"As long as my instructions are audible to him it doesn't concern me," Nurse insisted, spooning stuff up out of a little Dixie cup. "I've got my own life and the protection of my family to think of."

"Well, O.K., O.K. Don't chew my head off," the doctor said.

THE eye man was on vacation or something. While the hospital's operator called around to find someone else just as good, the other specialists were hurrying through the night to join us. I stood around looking at charts and chewing up more of Georgie's pills. Some of them tasted the way urine smells, some of them burned, some of them tasted like chalk. Various nurses, and two physicians who'd been tending somebody in I.C.U., were hanging out down here with us now.

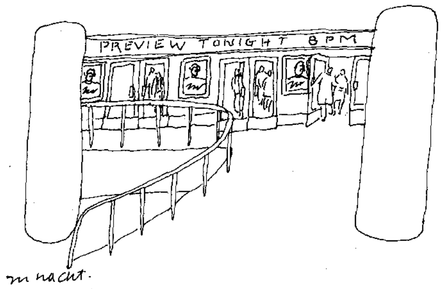
Everybody had a different idea about exactly how to approach the problem of removing the knife from Terrence Weber's brain. But when Georgie came in from prepping the patient—from shaving the patient's eyebrow and disinfecting the area around the wound, and so on—he seemed to be holding the hunting knife in his left hand.

The talk just dropped off a cliff.

"Where," the doctor asked finally, "did you get that?"

Nobody said one thing more, not for quite a long time.

After a while, one of the I.C.U. nurses said, "Your shoelace is untied." Georgie laid the knife on a chart and bent down to fix his shoe.



THERE were twenty more minutes left to get through.

"How's the guy doing?" I asked.

"Who?" Georgie said.

It turned out that Terrence Weber still had excellent vision in the one good eye, and acceptable motor and reflex, despite his earlier motor complaint. "His vitals are normal," Nurse said. "There's nothing wrong with the guy. It's one of those things."

AFTER a while you forget it's summer. You don't remember what the morning is. I'd worked two doubles with eight hours off in between, which I'd spent sleeping on a gurney in the nurses' station. Georgie's pills were making me feel like a giant helium-filled balloon, but I was wide awake. Georgie and I went out to the lot, to his orange pickup.

We lay down on a stretch of dusty plywood in the back of the truck with the daylight knocking against our eyelids

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SPRING GLEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL

THAT

I remember the moment because I planned, at six in the first grade,
to remember the moment forever. For weeks we memorized the alphabet,
reciting it in unison singsong, copying it in block capitals
on paper with wide lines, responding to letters on flash cards—
but we learned no words.
          Then we heard: "Tomorrow we start to read."
Miss Stephanie Ford wrote on the blackboard, in huge letters,
T-H-A-T. "That," she said, pointing her wooden stick, "is 'that.' "

POLITICS

Each year began in September with a new room and a new teacher:
I started with Stephanie Ford, then Miss Flint, Miss Sudell
whom I loved, Miss Stroker, Miss Fehm, Miss Pikosky . . .
                              At assemblies
I was announcer. I was elected class president in the eighth grade,
not because they liked me—it wasn't a popularity contest—
but because I was polite to grownups, spoke distinctly,
kept my shirt tucked in, and combed my hair: I was presidential.

THE BOX

Eight years of Spring Glen Grammar School. If I should live
to be eighty, this box would contain the tithe of everything.
In the glass case there's a rock garden with tiny snails, mosses,
infinitesimal houses, sidewalks, scissors and crayons, teachers,
and a model of Spring Glen Grammar School.
                              See, the doors swing
open; see, small pupils gather around a boy in blue knickers.
The box is humid; it continues to continue: nothing escapes.

—DONALD HALL

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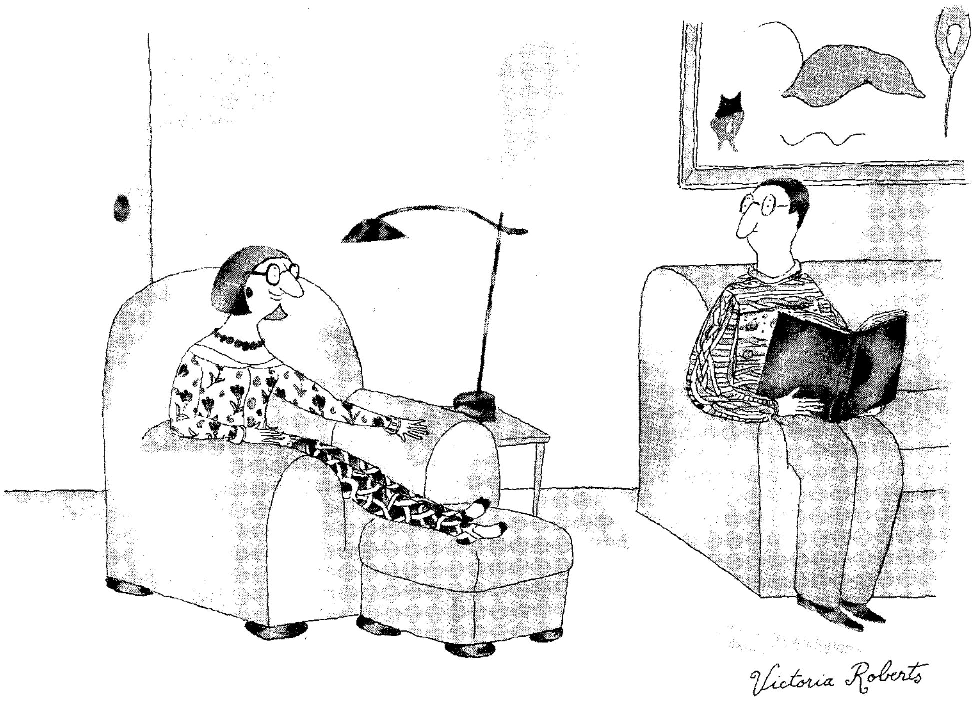


"I'm not wasting this year. I'm learning Catalan."

• •

and the fragrance of alfalfa thickening on our tongues.

"I want to go to church," Georgie said.

"Let's go to the county fair."

"I'd like to worship. I would."

"They have these injured hawks and eagles there. From the Humane Society," I said.

"I need a quiet chapel about now."

GEORGIE and I had a terrific time driving around. For a while the day was clear and peaceful. It was one of the moments you stay in, to hell with all the troubles of before and after. The sky is blue, and the dead are coming back. Later in the afternoon, with sad resignation, the county fair bares its breasts. A champion of the drug LSD, a very famous guru of the love generation, is being interviewed amid a TV crew off to the left of the poultry cages. His eyeballs look like he bought them in a joke shop. It doesn't occur to me as I pity this extraterrestrial, that in my life I've taken as much acid as he has.

AFTER that, we got lost. We drove for hours, literally hours, but we couldn't find the road back to town.

Georgie started to complain. "That was the worst fair I've been to. Where were the rides?"

"They had rides," I said.

"I didn't see one ride."

A jackrabbit scurried out in front of us, and we hit it.

"There was a merry-go-round, a Ferris wheel, and a thing called the Hammer that people were bent over vomiting from after they got off," I said. "Are you completely blind?"

"What was that?"

"A rabbit."

"Something thumped."

"You hit him. *He* thumped."

Georgie stood on the brake pedal. "Rabbit stew."

He threw the truck in reverse and zigzagged back toward the rabbit. "Where's my hunting knife?" He almost ran over the poor animal a second time.

"We'll camp in the wilderness," he said. "In the morning we'll breakfast on its haunches." He was waving Terrence Weber's hunting knife around in what I was sure was a dangerous way.

In a minute he was standing at the edge of the fields, cutting the scrawny little thing up, tossing away its organs. "I should have been a doctor," he cried.

A family in a big Dodge, the only car we'd seen for a long time, slowed down and gawked out the windows as they passed by. The father said, "What is it, a snake?"

"No, it's not a snake," Georgie said. "It's a rabbit with babies inside it."

"Babies!" the mother said, and the father sped the car forward, over the protests of several little kids in the back.

Georgie came back to my side of the truck with his shirtfront stretched out in front of him as if he were carrying apples in it, or some such, but they were, in fact, slimy miniature bunnies. "No way I'm eating those things," I told him.

"Take them, take them. I gotta drive, take them," he said, dumping them in my lap and getting in on his side of the truck. He started driving along faster and faster, with a look of glory on his face. "We killed the mother and saved the children," he said.

"It's getting late," I said. "Let's get back to town."

"You bet." Sixty, seventy, eighty-five, just topping ninety.

"These rabbits better be kept warm." One at a time I slid the little things in between my shirt buttons and nestled them against my belly. "They're hardly moving," I told Georgie.

"We'll get some milk and sugar and all that, and we'll raise them up ourselves. They'll get as big as gorillas."

The road we were lost on cut straight through the middle of the world. It was still daytime, but the sun had no more power than an ornament or a sponge. In this light the truck's hood, which had been bright orange, had turned a deep blue.

Georgie let us drift to the shoulder of the road, slowly, slowly, as if he'd fallen asleep or given up trying to find his way.

"What is it?"

"We can't go on. I don't have any headlights," Georgie said.

We parked under a strange sky with a faint image of a quarter-moon superimposed on it.

There was a little woods beside us. This day had been dry and hot, the buck pines and what all simmering patiently, but as we sat there smoking cigarettes it started to get very cold.

"The summer's over," I said.

That was the year when arctic clouds moved down over the Midwest, and we had two weeks of winter in September.

"Do you realize it's going to snow?" Georgie asked me.

He was right, a gun-blue storm was shaping up. We got out and walked around idiotically. The beautiful chill! That sudden crispness, and the tang of evergreen stabbing us!

The gusts of snow twisted themselves around our heads while the night fell. I couldn't find the truck. We just kept getting more and more lost. I kept calling, “Georgie, can you see?” and he kept saying, “See what? See what?”

The only light visible was a streak of sunset flickering below the hem of the clouds. We headed that way.

We bumped softly down a hill toward an open field that seemed to be a military graveyard, filled with rows and rows of austere, identical markers over soldiers' graves. I'd never before come across this cemetery. On the farther side of the field, just beyond the curtains of snow, the sky was torn away and the angels were descending out of a brilliant blue summer, their huge faces streaked with light and full of pity. The sight of them cut through my heart and down the knuckles of my spine, and if there'd been anything in my bowels I would have messed my pants from fear.

Georgie opened his arms and cried out, “It's the drive-in, man!”

“The drive-in . . .” I wasn't sure what these words meant.

“They're showing movies in a fucking blizzard!” Georgie screamed.

“I see. I thought it was something else,” I said.

We walked carefully down there and climbed through the busted fence and stood in the very back. The speakers, which I'd mistaken for grave markers, muttered in unison. Then there was tinkly music, of which I could very nearly make out the tune. Famous movie stars rode bicycles beside a river, laughing out of their gigantic lovely mouths. If anybody had come to see this show, they'd left when the weather started. Not one car remained, not even a broken-down one from last week, or one left here because it was out of gas. In a couple of minutes, in the middle of a whirling square dance, the screen turned black, the cinematic summer ended, the snow went dark, there was nothing but my breath.

“I'm starting to get my eyes back,” Georgie said in another minute.

A general grayness was giving birth to various shapes, it was true. “But which ones are close and which ones are far off?” I begged him to tell me.

By trial and error, with a lot of walking back and forth in wet shoes, we found the truck and sat inside it, shivering.

“Let's get out of here,” I said.

“We can't go anywhere without headlights.”

“We've gotta get back. We're a long way from home.”

“No, we're not.”

“We must have come three hundred miles.”

“We're right outside town, Fuckhead. We've just been driving around and around.”

“This is no place to camp. I hear the interstate over there.”

“We'll just stay here till it gets late. We can drive home late. We'll be invisible.”

We listened to the big rigs going from San Francisco to Pennsylvania along the interstate, like shudders down a long hacksaw blade, while the snow buried us.

Eventually Georgie said, “We better get some milk for those bunnies.”

“We don't have *milk*,” I said.

“We'll mix sugar up with it.”

“Will you forget about this milk all of a sudden?”

“They're mammals, man.”

“Forget about those rabbits.”

“Where are they, anyway?”

“You're not listening to me. I said, ‘Forget the rabbits.’ ”

“Where are they?”

The truth was I'd forgotten all about them, and they were dead.

“They slid around behind me and got squashed,” I said tearfully.

“They slid around *behind*?”

He watched while I pried them out from behind my back.

I picked them out one at a time and held them in my hands and we looked at them. There were eight. They weren't any bigger than my fingers, but everything was there.

Little feet! Eyelids! Even whiskers! “Deceased,” I said.

Georgie asked, “Does everything you touch turn to shit? Does this happen to you every time?”

“No wonder they call me Fuckhead.”

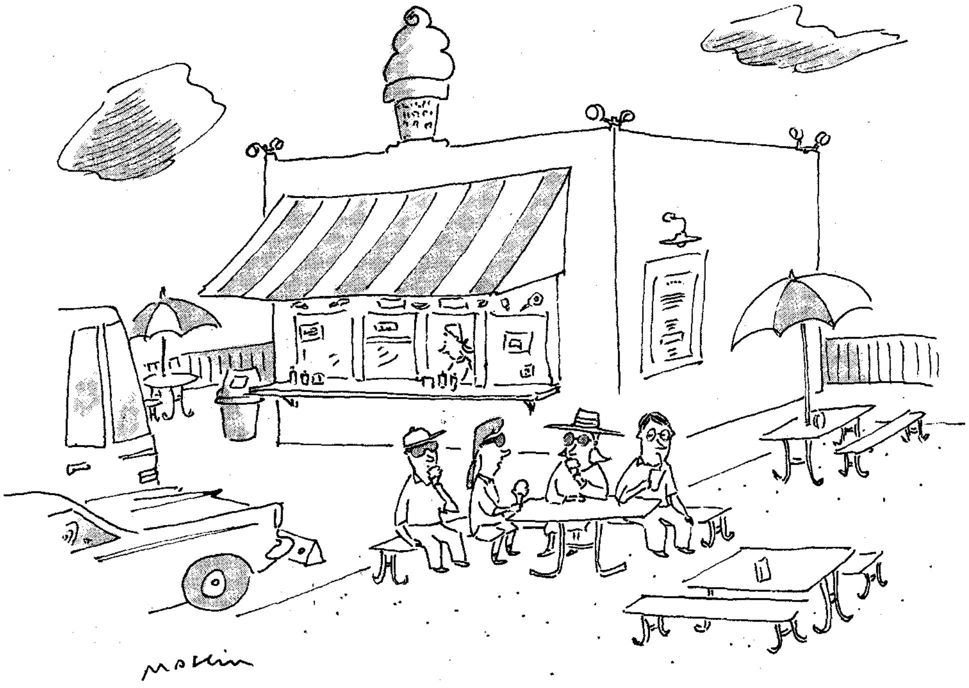
“It's a name that's going to stick.”

“I realize that.”

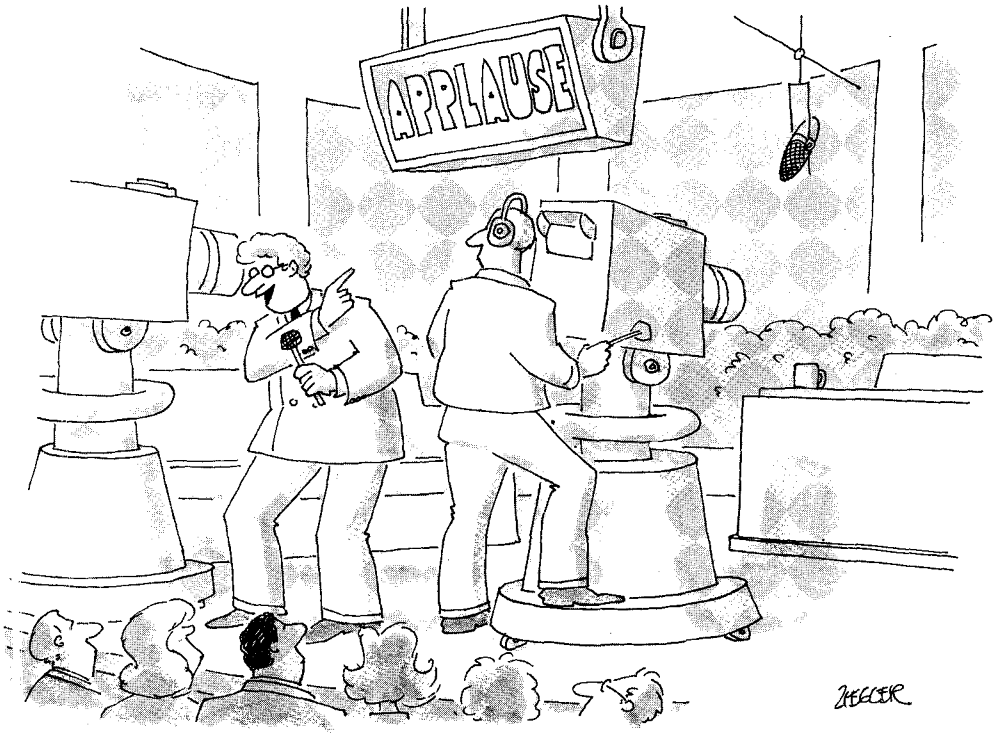
“ ‘Fuckhead’ is gonna ride you to your grave.”

“I just said so. I agreed with you in advance,” I said.

Or maybe that wasn't the time it snowed. Maybe it was the time we slept in the truck and I rolled over on the bunnies and flattened them. It doesn't matter. What's important for me to remember now is that early the next morning the snow was melted off the windshield and the daylight woke me up. A mist covered everything and, with the sunshine, was beginning to grow sharp and strange. The bunnies weren't a problem yet, or they'd already been a problem and were already forgotten, and there was nothing on



“It's true, Darlene—until I met Ben I didn't care if my cone was sugar or wafer.”



"The reason it's going to keep flashing on and off is that we love you, and we want you to love us, too."

• •

my mind. I felt the beauty of the morning. I could understand how a drowning man might suddenly feel a deep thirst being quenched. Or how the slave might become a friend to his master. Georgie slept with his face right on the steering wheel.

I saw bits of snow resembling an abundance of blossoms on the stems of the drive-in speakers—no, revealing the blossoms that were always there. A bull elk stood still in the pasture beyond the fence giving off an air of authority and stupidity. And a coyote jogged across the pasture and faded away among the saplings.

THAT afternoon we got back to work in time to resume everything as if it had never stopped happening and we'd never been anywhere else.

"The Lord," the intercom said, "is my shepherd." It did that each evening because this was a Catholic hospital. "Our Father, who art in Heaven," and so on.

"Yeah, yeah," Nurse said.

The man with the knife in his head, Terrence Weber, was released around suppertime. They'd kept him overnight and given him an eyepatch—all for no reason, really.

He stopped off at E.R. to say goodbye. "Well, those pills they gave me make everything taste terrible," he said.

"It could have been worse," Nurse said.

"Even my tongue."

"It's just a miracle you didn't end up sightless or at least dead," she reminded him.

The patient recognized me. He acknowledged me with a smile. "I was peeping on the lady next door while she was out there sunbathing," he said. "My wife decided to blind me."

He shook Georgie's hand. Georgie didn't know him. "Who are you supposed to be?" he asked Terrence Weber.

SOME hours before that, Georgie had said something that had suddenly and completely explained the difference between us. We'd been driving back toward town, along the Old Highway, through the flatness. We picked up a hitchhiker, a boy I knew. We stopped the truck and the boy climbed slowly up out of the fields as out of the mouth of a volcano. His name was Hardee. He looked even worse than we probably did.

"We got messed up and slept in the truck all night," I told Hardee.

"I had a feeling," Hardee said. "Either that or, you know, driving a thousand miles."

"That, too," I said.

"Or you're sick or diseased or something."

"Who's this guy?" Georgie asked.

"This is Hardee. He lived with me last summer. I found him on the doorstep. What happened to your dog?" I asked Hardee.

"He's still down there."

"Yeah, I heard you went to Texas."

"I was working on a bee farm," Hardee said.

"Wow. Do those things sting you?"

"Not like you'd think," Hardee said. "You're part of their daily drill. It's all part of a harmony."

Outside, the same identical stretch of ground repeatedly rolled past our faces. The day was cloudless, blinding. But Georgie said, "Look at that," pointing straight ahead of us.

One star was so hot it showed, bright and blue, in the empty sky.

"I recognized you right away," I told Hardee. "But what happened to your hair? Who chopped it off?"

"I hate to say."

"Don't tell me."

"They drafted me."

"Oh no."

"Oh yeah. I'm AWOL. I'm bad AWOL. I got to get to Canada."

"Oh, that's terrible," I said to Hardee.

"Don't worry," Georgie said. "We'll get you there."

"How?"

"Somehow. I think I know some people. Don't worry. You're on your way to Canada."

That world! These days it's all been erased and they've rolled it up like a scroll and put it away somewhere. Yes, I can touch it with my fingers. But where is it?

After a while Hardee asked Georgie, "What do you do for a job?," and Georgie said, "I save lives."

—DENIS JOHNSON

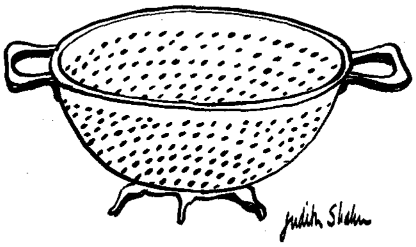
A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE BEES FROM RIO CLARO

ONE morning last April, Manoel Tavares Ferreira put on a white protective suit, yellow rubber boots, and yellow plastic gloves, and set out to make an inspection of one of his apiaries, about thirty miles from Ribeirão Prêto, in southeast Brazil. Rain had fallen heavily the day before, and the *terra roxa*—the reddish, mineral-rich soil—of the upland region stuck to his boots. "I grew up partly in the city and partly in the country, and I started keeping bees when I was a boy," Tavares told me as we walked through a stand of *aroeira* trees. "In 1965, I got into beekeeping as a business. I started with fifty colonies, and the bees I managed back then were European—just ordinary honeybees. But within a year or two I began to notice a change in their behavior. Some colonies seemed more nervous. They were quicker, jumpier, and when you worked a hive they were much more runny—runny bees will run down a frame and drop off when you pick it up, whereas European bees are apt to stay put. Then I began to notice that my bees were getting more defensive. I mean, they got riled up very easily, and they were much quicker to sting. They would attack in overwhelming numbers, and after they got started they might chase you for half a mile, while European bees would usually drop out after about a hundred yards.

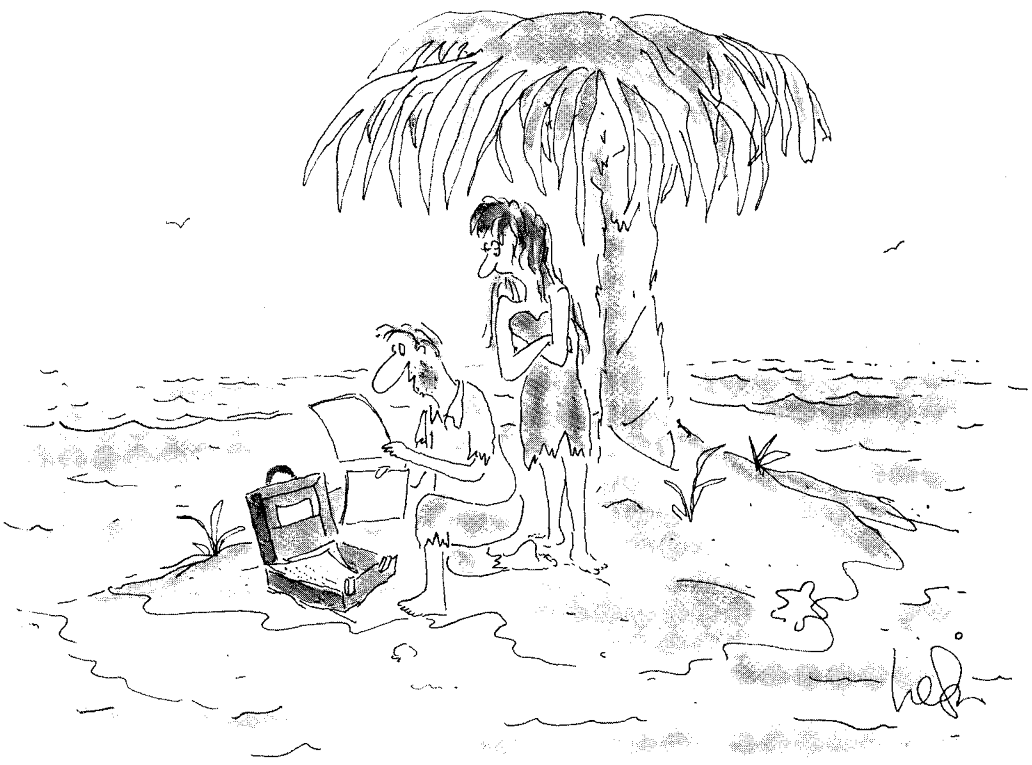
"All those changes came pretty fast, but they didn't come as a surprise, since for several years we had all been hearing about Africanized bees, and how they were taking over here in Brazil and killing pigs and chickens, and we knew that we were going to have problems once they had come into our apiaries. Well, after more than twenty years, I can tell you that these bees are harder to manage than the bees we used to have, but they can be managed—you just have to learn how. And these bees are much, much more productive. Today, Apis Flora—the company I run with my partner, Antonio Carlos Meda—has a thousand colonies. When we employ migratory beekeeping—when we move the bees from eucalyptus trees to orange groves, for example—we get an average yield of a hundred and twenty pounds a hive per year. In 1988, our best year so far, we averaged a hundred and fifty pounds a hive. And our very best colonies produced three hundred pounds. Before Africanization, beekeepers in Brazil were lucky to get an annual yield of thirty pounds a hive."

When we reached a clearing, I saw that twenty hives, most of which consisted of three wooden boxes on top of one another, were mounted on individual wooden stands placed about three feet apart. Two of Tavares' associates, also wearing protective clothing, were waiting nearby, and one was holding a large smoker—a bellows device that burns wood chips. (Smoke causes bees to become sluggish.) The man with the smoker shot several puffs at a beehive, and then Tavares removed the top from the hive, studied its contents, and pulled off his gloves. Using his bare hands, he lifted out a frame containing a comb whose cells were filled about equally with honey and with developing brood. The comb was covered with dark, skittish-looking bees, which formed shifting patterns of silver and gray as they ran nervously about or took wing. More bees emerged from the hive, and within a few seconds a cloud of several thousand agitated insects had surrounded the beekeepers, swirling around their heads and bouncing off their white suits. Holding the frame at an angle, Tavares examined the comb, poked at a bee or two with his forefinger, and eventually returned the frame carefully to a vertical position and slid it back into the hive. Then he and his associates moved on to the next colony and examined it in a similar way. When they had opened three hives, Tavares glanced at me and said, "If you gave me a chance to go back to the way things used to be, twenty-five years ago, I'd say forget it. I'm happy with the bees I've got."



MANOEL TAVARES, who is forty-three, is among the more successful beekeepers in the state of São Paulo, which extends for some ninety-six thousand square miles north and west of the city of that name. He is also a former president of the local beekeeping society, is active in Brazil's Green Party, and is the president of a cultural and ecological association called Pau Brasil. With a degree in agricultural engineering and several decades of experience with bees, he probably knows as much about Brazil's travails with bees as any other beekeeper. And though the Africanized honeybee has been accepted as the standard in most parts of Brazil—it has almost totally supplanted the European honeybee, which was formerly the norm—neither Tavares nor anyone else who keeps bees in Brazil would pretend that the transition has been easy. The first Africanized bees—the ancestors of the bees I saw that day—originated about seventy-five miles south of Tavares' apiary, outside a city called Rio Claro. In the fall of 1956, a Brazilian geneticist named Warwick Estevam Kerr, who was on the faculty of the University of São Paulo at Piracicaba, brought some queen bees from Africa to Brazil for experimental purposes. The queens belonged to the species *Apis mellifera* and to a subspecies that was then called *adansonii* but since 1975, for arcane reasons, has been called *scutellata*. Honeybees of the species *A. mellifera*, which appear to have originated in western Asia, spread to other parts of the world thousands of years ago, and have long been recognized as beneficial insects. Before the importation of the *scutellata* subspecies, virtually all the hive-dwelling, honey-producing bees of the Americas were descended from European races like *A. mellifera ligustica*, the Italian bee; *A. mellifera iberica*, the Spanish bee; and *A. mellifera mellifera*, the German, or black, bee.

After transporting the bees to Brazil, whose tropical climate resembles that of their African homeland, Dr. Kerr



“Thank heavens! Some work.”

• •

and his colleagues kept them in a protected experimental apiary near Rio Claro. About a year later, however, an accident, whose somewhat mysterious nature is still being discussed in scientific circles, resulted in the escape of a number of the African queens, with accompanying swarms. These *scutellata*-derived bees rapidly began mating with members of other subspecies in the region.

The details of what happened next may never be fully understood, but the broad outlines are probably known to anyone who has been paying attention to bees—or to “killer bee” movies—over the past three decades. Through a conjunction of many subtle genetic and environmental factors, the crossbreeding of African bees with European ones resulted rather quickly in a race of exceptionally hardy insects. People soon realized that these new bees had unusual traits, one of which was an ability to overwhelm and supplant other honeybee populations they encountered. Nothing seemed capable of stopping the Africanized bees—or even of slowing them much—and they have continued to multiply and spread ever since. Today, Africanized honeybees—also known as AHBs, African-derived bees, New World African bees, Neotropical African bees, Brazilian bees, and South American bees—are the dominant honeybees in Brazil. The term “killer bee” is rarely used by experts, but what the bees should be called is still a matter of some fairly acidulous debate. If the bees are the result of hybridization, as most researchers believe, they cannot have a scientific name, because the rules of zoological nomenclature do not permit names for hybrids. Therefore, most authorities seem to have settled on either “Africanized honeybee” or “AHB”; but the editors of the most recent compilation of scholarly writings on the subject, “The ‘African’ Honey Bee,” decided on that title because—according to one of the editors, Dr. Marla Spivak—the quotation marks provide an intellectual fail-safe.

In the sixties and seventies, Africanized bees moved beyond Brazil’s borders, and managed to displace most other bees—usually European honeybees, or EHBs—in many parts of South America. Within the past decade, AHBs have completed a virtual takeover of Central America, too, and since 1986, when they first appeared in Mexico—in the state of Chiapas, near the Guatemalan border—they have kept on moving northward. Finally, last October, they turned up in Texas. During the thirty-four years since AHBs came into being, they have expanded their territory to more than five million square miles. In the process, they have generated fear, disrupted agriculture and local economies, strained public-health resources, killed hundreds of thousands of animals and possibly more than a thousand people, and given rise to all sorts of reports, fantasies, and jokes, even nicknames for basketball teams. Now in about the eightieth generation, AHBs are thought to number in the billions.

While many people seem to think that Africanized bees are readily identifiable—perhaps by being especially large or unusually hideous—the fact is that an Africanized bee looks a lot like a European bee, behaves a lot like it, and to untrained eyes is indistinguishable from it. Even scientists have trouble telling one kind of bee from another, and usually rely on laboratory tests to reveal characteristic differences in the size and shape of certain body parts, in DNA, in some enzymes, and in certain hydrocarbons in the cuticle, or exoskeleton. The European honeybee evolved in a temperate climate, with stable resources and few predators, whereas the Africanized bee has an ancestor—*scutellata*—that evolved in a tropical climate, with scattered or intermittent resources and many predators. Apparently as a result, the Africanized bee has developed into a hypersensitive, hyperactive, and hyperprocreative creature.

Of special concern to beekeepers is the fact that AHB colonies are apt to swarm and to abscond much more often than European ones, and to travel much farther when doing so. Swarming is a process in which a queen, accompanied by several thousand followers, leaves a nest and flies off to found a new one, while another queen stays behind with the remainder of the colony. Absconding is a process in which the entire colony leaves its nest, usually because of some stress, and seeks a new one. Once AHBs have established their new colony, they do almost everything sooner, faster, more often, more efficiently, or more intensely than their European cousins. The eggs of the Africanized bee develop into adult workers in twenty days, a day less than it takes the eggs of the European bee to develop. An Africanized colony produces proportionately more males than a European colony. An Africanized queen hatches earlier than her European counterpart. Africanized worker bees have been observed foraging both earlier and later in the day than European workers, and flying faster from flower to flower. They are also much more opportunistic: in foraging, European bees will look for highly concentrated nectar, but Africanized bees will take advantage of whatever concentration they can find. Moreover, while European bees are choosy about where they nest, preferring enclosed spaces like hollow trees or walls, Africanized bees will nest almost anywhere they can find protection from the elements. Africanized bees are skilled robbers, too: they steal food from other colonies when resources are scarce. And—in a rather macabre practice—they have been known to invade a European colony, kill the queen, install their own queen, and enslave the resident population.

On the positive side, there is evidence that Africanized bees are more resistant to diseases and mites than European bees. And, according to all the Brazilian authorities I spoke to, Africanized bees tend to produce much more honey. However, the AHB's role as a honey producer—like its role as a crop pollinator—has become a tangled and controversial subject. Turning to the experts, I discovered, can produce so many conflicting answers that you begin to wonder whether everyone is talking about the same bee. Meanwhile, so many bizarre reports have been published, so many fictions invented, and so many apocryphal tales told that a layman might be excused for viewing Africanized bees not as part of a fascinating biological and ecological phenomenon, unprecedented in our planet's history, but as some sort of weirdly mutated insects from outer space, bent on conquering the earth. (In the 1978 film "The Swarm," Michael Caine, playing a scientist, says, "We have been invaded by an enemy far more lethal than any human force." The bees go on to prove it, taking aim on cities, making helicopters crash, sending a passenger train into a canyon, and causing a nuclear-energy plant to explode. By the end of the film, some thirty-seven thousand people have been killed, and Houston has burned to the ground.)

FIBRE OPTICS

Again a call from an old friend I thought I'd lost,
the name sheepishly uttered, the pause, the rush
of joy liquefying the wires:

the long draft imbibed, savored,
of common names, Albert's mother's remarriage, Sandra's
promotion, Jeremiah—when did Jeremiah change his name to
Steve? And the flow of explanations
into which we dip—of home, of work, of love,
how it's a mere mockup of a river, a silvery ether
made of tinfoil shaken by Props from the wings of the stage,
not a real river, not real life,

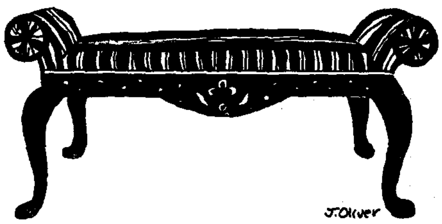
but that doesn't explain why
we never talked till now. Why now? Why not next year?
Certainly it's as if nothing had changed; we swim smoothly
through years and jobs and days, drifting back
to the familiar waters of our estrangement
only when you go off to fetch your address book.

How hard the ear works to make out the background noise,
the clink of the coffee mug, the chatter of Sunday papers,
how hard it presses against the ear-warmed disk
to discern—what? The click of a hanger emptying
its mundane load? The VCR switching on by itself?
How weary the sounds that stumble across the wire—
the old address pencilled out, the new address
pencilled in—and everything clear,
static-free, instantaneous, flowing true,
by long-distance fibre optics.

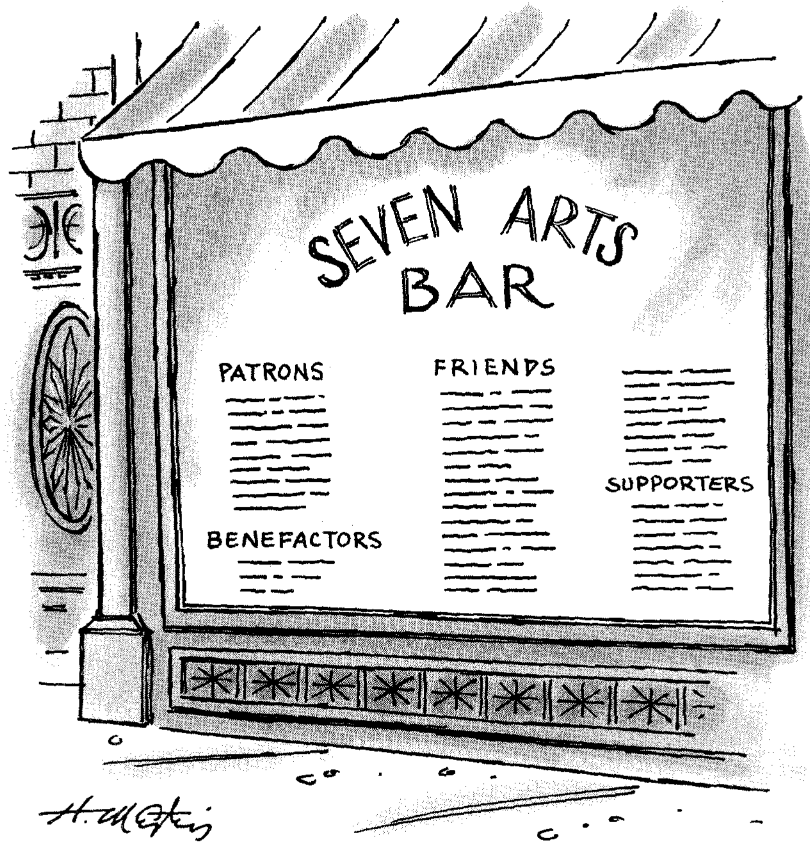
—David Woo

• •

THE oldest and most highly developed laboratory for bee studies in Latin America is at the University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Prêto. It is part of the university's Genetics Department, which was founded in 1965 by Dr. Kerr. Under his leadership, the department, with its bee lab, expanded, attracted a number of eminent scientists to its staff, and now does more research on Africanized bees than any other facility in the world—except, possibly, for labs of the United States Department of Agriculture, which began studying the AHB a few years later. In 1981, when Dr. Kerr retired, his position was taken by Dr. Lionel Segui Gonçalves.



The morning after I visited Manoel Tavares' apiary, I called on Professor Gonçalves, in his office in the university's bee-genetics laboratory, which occupies a low-lying building on a tree-covered campus that was once a coffee plantation. Dr. Gonçalves is a lean, thoughtful man in his late forties. He told me, "It's been nearly thirty years since I began working with Professor Kerr, as a graduate student, in Rio Claro. When all the excitement about the Africanized bees started, we realized that we didn't know anything about them—there was nothing in the literature. So we began holding beekeeping congresses, to exchange ideas with beekeepers, scientists, students, and others. We did intensive biological studies, and then we went in other directions. One of the most important was beekeeping methodology. We experimented with different kinds of smokers and various ways of setting out hives. There are dozens of special techniques—even the way you hold a frame when you remove it from a hive for inspection can be critical. The results have been fantastic. In 1970, with a few thousand beekeepers, Brazil produced between four and five thousand tons of honey. We now have around fifty thousand beekeepers, and last year they produced more than forty thousand tons of honey." In the United States, which has a much larger beekeeping industry, annual honey production is about a hundred and twenty-five thousand tons.



Dr. Gonçalves invited me to go for a stroll. Behind the lab, some two hundred wooden hives, containing Africanized bees, were aligned in neat rows. A mist was in the air, and since bees are averse to flying when it is damp only a few were buzzing. Dr. Gonçalves said that he found it hard to understand why most American apiculturists still hesitate to acknowledge the virtues of AHBs. "The evidence is here, for anybody who wants to look at it. All over Brazil—even in the north, where there used to be little beekeeping—you'll find beekeepers who not only have adapted to Africanized bees but prefer them, both because a certain amount of aggressiveness is thought desirable and because European bees just can't compete in these latitudes."

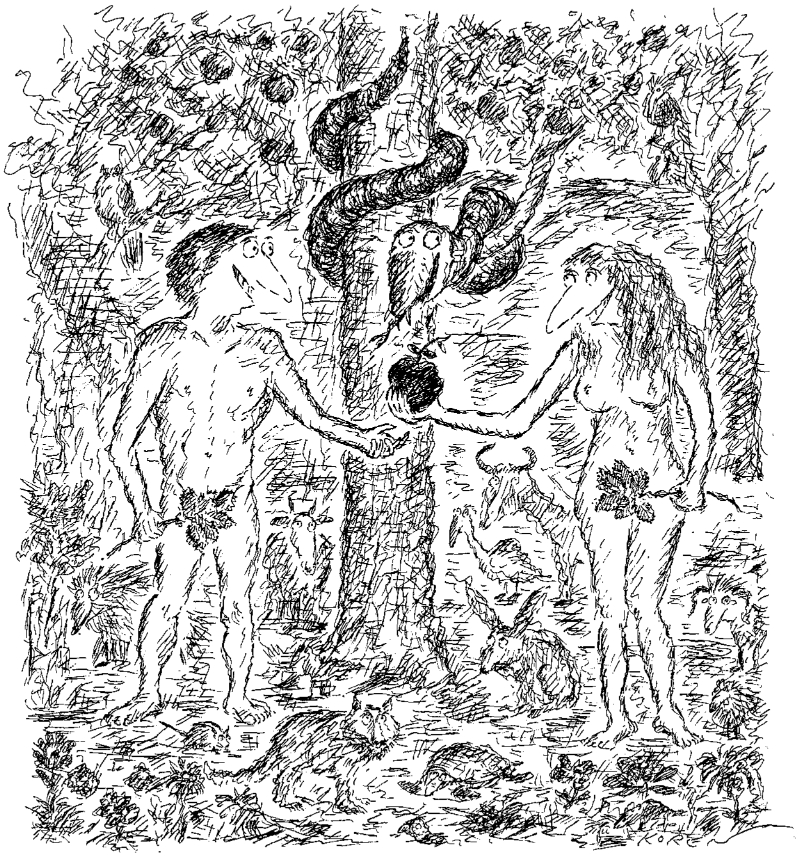
Soon we were joined by Dr. David De Jong, a lanky, forty-year-old American, who is a professor at the university. Over the past several years, he has taken part in various projects in Central America, working with the United Nations and other organizations to help government officials and beekeepers learn how to deal with Africanized bees. Flicking an occasional bee off his face, Dr. De Jong told me that he is strongly opposed to the Africanized-bee policies that have been developed in the United States. "Brazil has had more than thirty years' experience with the Africanized bee, and there are some twenty-five people with doctoral degrees in this country working on the bee," he said. "And yet—astonishingly—American authorities, and American scientists, are still not paying much attention to what's happening down here. In fact, the Americans are trapped in the search-and-contain-and-destroy routine that has preoccupied them from the start. Their goal is still to keep Africanized bees out of the country, or to kill them off, or, at least, to do everything possible to blunt their influence now that they've arrived. Most of the American authorities have locked themselves into the doctrine that the Africanized bee is, without qualification, a *bad bee*. And a lot of American scientists are concentrating on increasingly theoretical things—doing elaborate research projects, arguing about the structure of the genome, and so on. Up in the States, they're still talking about esoteric solutions instead of trying things that we know will work. Eventually, as the bees move into a region that is suitable for them, Africanization is bound to take place. You can't stop it. The goal should be to learn how to deal with it, instead of trying to play fireman.

"When I came to Brazil, in 1980, what I noticed immediately was not just that I got stung a lot—I expected that—but that these bees were *strange*. I could see that even a small colony was much more jumpy. So I watched the people and how they worked, and after a while I found that I was getting accustomed to the bees here. After a few months, Africanized bees began to seem normal to me. Then, when I went up to Mexico and the United States, I saw *those* bees as strange. You have to get a *feel* for these bees, because they are *different bees*. It's a question of living with Africanized bees awhile, and getting to know them, and gradually learning what to do and what not to do. The best teachers are the bees themselves."

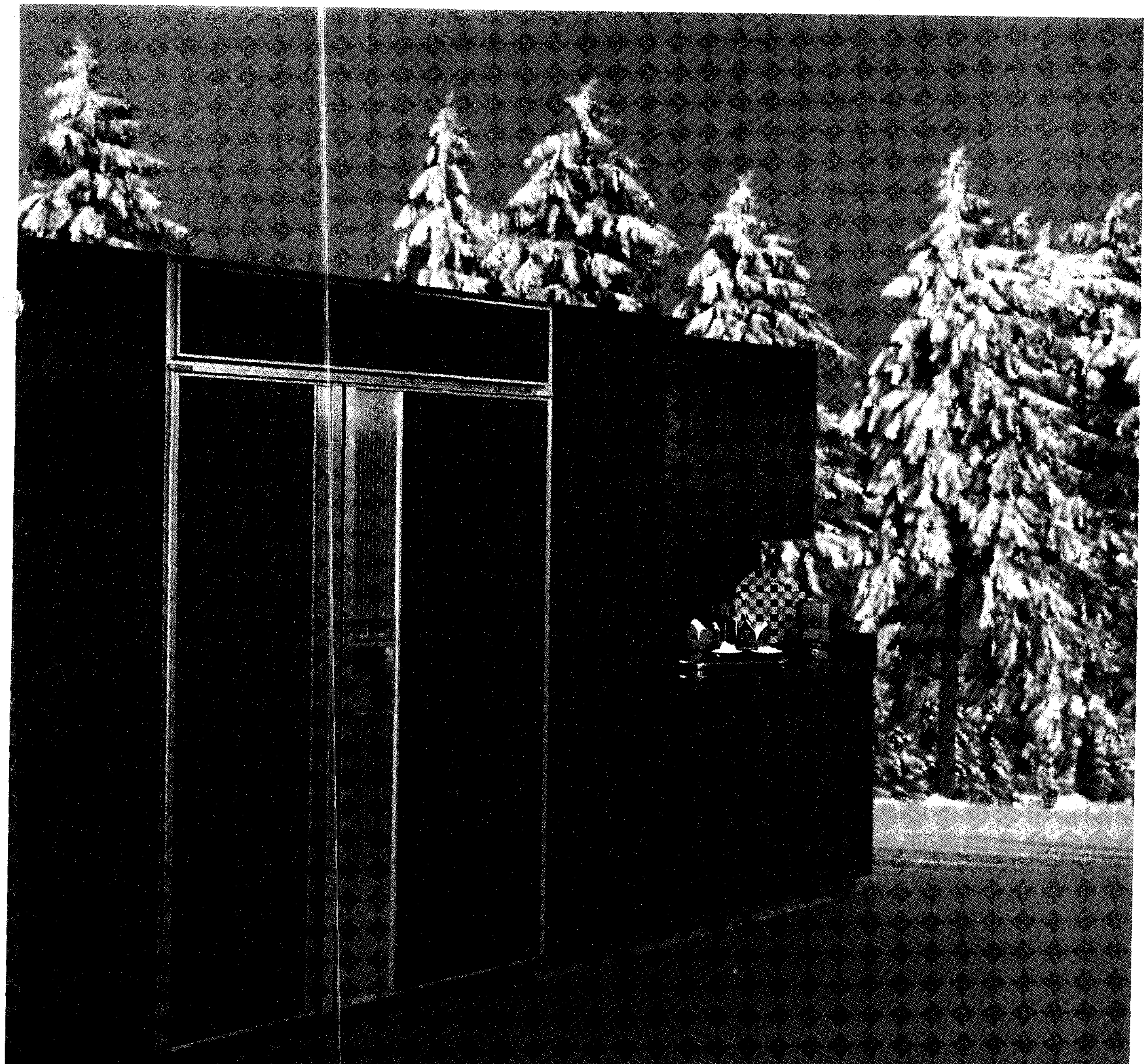
LAST October 15th, the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture discovered a colony of Africanized bees near Hidalgo, in the Rio Grande Valley of Texas, and two days later it announced to the public the first instance of the bees' having entered this country by overland migration. (A couple of dozen times, a swarm has turned up here after hitching a ride on a truck or a ship, the most celebrated such arrival being in California in 1985, when an AHB colony near Bakersfield managed to survive and multiply for several months before it and twelve daughter colonies were found and destroyed. And at least once, researchers believe, AHBs have been brought into the United States by a beekeeper who was impatient to see how they would behave; the beekeeper has not spoken publicly about the matter.) Acting on plans worked out over the previous couple of years, the Texas Apiary Inspection Service immediately declared a quarantine, to prevent any honeybees from being moved out of the region. For six months after the Texas discovery, no other Africanized swarms were detected, but on April 15th of this year the A.R.S. announced that a second colony had been found in the same region. By the end of August, about a hundred and forty AHB swarms had been discovered. The quarantine has been extended to twelve counties in the valley, and now covers some sixteen thousand square miles. Four people in Texas have been involved in stinging incidents, the most severe of which resulted in some seventy stings. (Meanwhile, in July and August, two people there were killed by European bees.) Otherwise, the effect of the presence of AHBs in Texas has been felt largely by beekeepers in the valley, who have been prevented by the quarantine from moving their bees as they usually do.

Of course, despite long planning and much prognostication, the ultimate effect of the bees' presence in the United States remains unknown. The official approach to Africanized bees in the United States, however, has been clear for a number of years. In January, 1972, a committee of the National Academy of Sciences which had been formed a few months earlier to study the Africanized bee published its final report, in which it stated, "Because of its unprovoked mass stinging and because of frequent swarming and absconding, the Brazilian bee is dangerous to people and animals and is difficult to manage. . . . The Committee believes that every effort should be made to prevent the Brazilian bee from reaching North America." Now the goal, in the words of the U.S.D.A., is to "mitigate the impact of Africanized honeybees on agriculture and the general public." That is to be done both through research and through active measures, with the aim of destroying the bees, slowing their migration, preventing them from interbreeding with managed bees, and, if possible, altering them genetically. In anticipation of Africanization, many Southern and Southwestern states and some localities have developed plans of their own, to be put into effect in conjunction with federal actions. Quarantines and restrictions on movement are common techniques, and so are rules mandating the destruction of all wild colonies of bees within a certain radius of a site where AHBs have been found. A few communities have decided to ban beekeeping altogether. Methods have been developed for identifying the bees quickly, and much work has been done in an effort to learn how to modify them through selective breeding. Some plans call for inspectors to check colonies regularly, to make sure the queens are European, and then to certify apiaries as "AHB-free." Officials justify their position by saying that the situation in the United States is not analogous to conditions farther south, mainly because our climate is more temperate and our beekeeping industry is much larger and better developed. On the whole, American regulatory agencies have continued to regard the Africanized bee as a powerful enemy—like such previous insect scourges as the fire ant and the Mediterranean fruit fly—and to believe that a sophisticated technological war must be waged against it. Meanwhile, other voices, many of them in the private sector, have been urging a more adaptive approach.

For a week or so before the first migratory Africanized swarm was found in the United States, I had been hanging around the Agricultural Research Service laboratory in Weslaco, Texas. That A.R.S. station, situated about fifty miles from Brownsville and about ten miles from the Mexican border, has in recent years been the one most concerned with monitoring the advance of Africanized bees. (The A.R.S.'s main Africanized-honeybee laboratory, in Baton Rouge, remains central in determining the course of studies, carrying out research, and advising U.S.D.A. authorities in Washington on policy. At the moment, the Weslaco station, being closer to the action, is conducting most of the field work.) Among other things the Weslaco lab has done is to establish a number of trap lines to catch wild swarms, which it routinely kills and analyzes. It was in one of the Weslaco station's swarm traps, or bait hives—bucket-shaped devices made of wood pulp which are baited with a chemical lure and hung in a tree—that two of the lab's inspectors found a colony whose combs contained suspiciously small cells, typical of AHBs. As soon as the lab work had been done on that colony, and the identification had been confirmed at the U.S.D.A.'s main office, in Maryland, the director of honeybee re-



"You guys are certainly in the right place at the right time."



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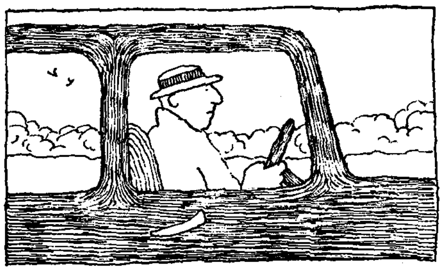
search at the Weslaco station, Dr. Anita M. Collins, held a press conference to announce that Africanized bees had at last made their way into the United States. Though the news was reported widely, the reaction turned out to be remarkably subdued. "Except for a couple of phone calls," Dr. Collins told me the day after the press conference. "One woman asked me if she should keep her dog indoors. And a man asked if he should sell his house and move to Vermont."

Moving to Vermont might or might not allay the man's anxieties. Until recently, most estimates have limited the insects' eventual range to the southern and southwestern United States. But last November a study in the journal *Comparative Biochemistry and Physiology* predicted that Africanized bees may ultimately migrate as far north as Washington State, Illinois, and southern New York State. Some researchers—including Dr. Thomas E. Rinderer, the director of the A.R.S. Baton Rouge honeybee lab—believe that the bees may someday reach the Canadian border. Perhaps the leading student of the bees' movements is Dr. Orley R. Taylor, Jr., a professor of entomology at the University of Kansas, who in the mid-seventies began issuing a series of maps predicting when AHBs would reach various countries. Dr. Taylor's projections, which have proved remarkably accurate, have been based on a migration rate of between two and three hundred miles a year. He told me recently that somewhere near a curving line reaching from Santa Cruz, California, to Fayetteville, North Carolina, the bees should approach their climatic limits, beyond which there may exist a transition zone containing more than one kind of bee. Farther north, he said, the established European population should remain pretty much as it is. One unknown, despite various experiments, is the ability of AHBs to withstand winter in the Northern Hemisphere, as European bees do. Another unknown—which currently has the apicultural world scrambling for space in scholarly journals—concerns the extent to which AHBs may be hybridizing with other bees. While most experts, including Dr. Rinderer, take it for granted that hybridization is occurring, a small but eminent group maintains that the evidence—such as the presence of a particular form of DNA and of genetic markers for certain enzymes—indicates that the migrating bees are not blending with other feral, or wild, bee populations but supplanting them. Hence, Dr. Taylor and his colleagues say, the migrating bees are truly of the *scutellata* subspecies, and are arriving in the United States almost as they were when introduced into Brazil thirty-five years ago.

The Africanized bee's most highly publicized characteristic, of course, has been the intensity of its attack—technically speaking, its high degree of *defensiveness*. Horror movies to the contrary, Africanized bees do not have some special grievance against human beings. However, when defending the area around their nest Africanized bees will attack an intruder in huge numbers, sending out ten thousand or more members of the colony, which may pursue the intruder over great distances and continue to sting for an hour or more—occasionally long after the victim has died. All these traits are similar to those of European bees but are much more strongly expressed, and although studies have shown that the venom of an individual Africanized bee is no more toxic than that of a European one, the large number of stings inflicted can result in greater poisoning. In this context, public-health officials are apt to remind people that bee stings pose two separate threats to health. First, about one and a half per cent of the North American population is allergic to bee venom, and can go into anaphylactic shock and die from the effects of one sting, whether by an Africanized or a European bee. The second threat is from mass envenomation, but studies have shown that most adults can survive between three hundred and five hundred bee stings without treatment. A colony of European bees will occasionally inflict more than five hundred stings, but a colony of Africanized bees is far more likely to do so: an autopsy of a University of Miami graduate student who died after a prolonged attack in Costa Rica in 1986 revealed that he had received some eight thousand stings.



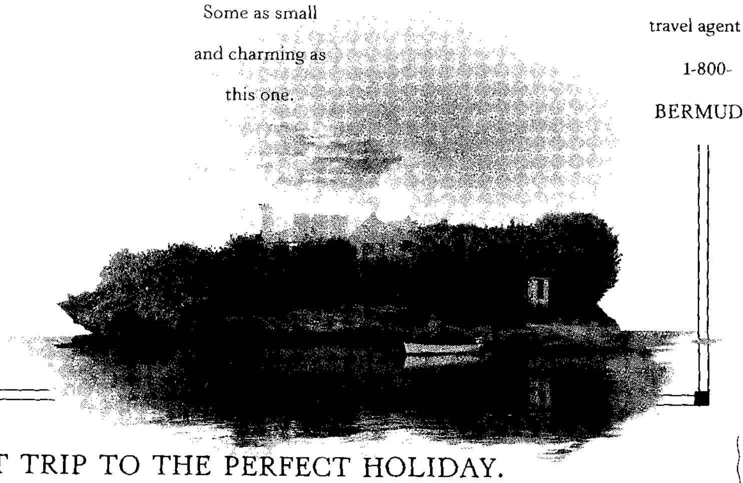
Most of the stinging incidents that have occurred over the thirty-four years since AHBs first appeared have involved wild colonies. Beekeepers generally know how to avoid serious incidents, and, while ordinary people would do well to stay away from apiaries containing Africanized bees, the greatest dangers have not often involved managed situations. A great many animals—especially farm and domestic animals—have been stung to death by Africanized bees, but it has usually turned out that the animals were fenced in or otherwise prevented from escaping. The typical human victim has been someone who, while walking in the country or working on a farm, has accidentally disturbed a wild colony, and caused the bees to go into their defensive behavior, which can be so violent that some scientists have called it an explosion. Normally, a quick-witted and fleet-footed person can outrun the bees, though he or she may end up with a few stings. But there have been numerous instances of people who, for one reason or another, have not escaped. Sometimes the person has been in a place that is especially difficult to leave, such as a cave or a ravine. Young children and also old or infirm people have frequently been victims. Others, while physically capable of taking action, have apparently panicked and remained in one place, thrashing around in a futile effort to fend off the attack.

In 1986, a report in *Annals of Internal Medicine* stated that, on the basis of accounts in newspapers and magazines, and of contacts with government officials, at least three hundred and fifty people had been killed worldwide by Africanized bees since 1957. The report concluded, however, that because such accounts dealt with less than half the geographic area invaded by the bees, and because there were years for which no information was available, a more realistic estimate would be between seven hundred and a thousand deaths. Some authorities have speculated that there have been many more than that. Certain countries have suffered more than others, partly because they were poorly prepared, but also because many of their people still engage in rustic beekeeping and cling to ancient beliefs, such as that bees will not sting you if you clench your fists and hold your breath, or that a virgin can walk through a swarm of bees unscathed. A lack of prompt medical attention in rural areas where the bees abound also has undoubtedly cost many victims their lives. There have been some four hundred bee-related deaths in Venezuela since the bees entered the country, in 1975. In Mexico, on the other hand, in the five years since the bees arrived forty-six bee-related deaths have been reported. An A.R.S. scientist, Dr. Justin O. Schmidt, and two colleagues found that each Africanized bee actually carries only sixty-four per cent as much venom as its European cousin. In judging the lethal propensities of AHBs, Dr. Schmidt and others have pointed out that ordinary European honeybees can also kill. If it is true that Africanized bees killed between seven hundred and a thousand people between 1957 and 986, the annual death toll from Africanized bees in the Americas would be between twenty-four and thirty-four. But each year in the United States some forty people are killed by stinging insects, about half of them by bees. Eventually, if accurate figures are compiled, it may turn out that the death rate from Africanized bees is quite similar to the death rate from European bees.

TWO weeks after migratory Africanized bees entered the United States, fifteen members of the American Honey Producers Association set out to see some of the bees in regions where they were already well established. The fifteen beekeepers were a mixed bunch, ranging in age from their twenties to their seventies, and coming from various parts of the country. They were accompanied by a U.S.D.A. scientist, and planned to link up in a few days with a colleague of his and with two members of Mexico's AHB-control program. In the words of the association's president, Richard Adee, a South Dakotan who is this country's largest beekeeper, the goal was "to find out if we can handle these bees or not." They assembled at Weslaco on a Monday morning, and, travelling in a van and two pickups, crossed the border on the start of a trip that would take them about two thousand miles along the Gulf Coast.

When the beekeepers began their trip, I was in northern Mexico, and by the time I caught up with them, the following Thursday evening, they had reached Villahermosa, the capital of the state of Tabasco. For beekeepers, of course, Africanization has implications that go far beyond the danger of getting stung: recently, a U.S.D.A. official estimated that the AHB could cost the American beekeeping industry losses of up to fifty-eight million dollars a year. At breakfast Friday morning, I found the beekeepers discussing the already depressed condition of the beekeeping industry in the United States. Because of currently low honey prices—brought about partly by foreign competition—and because of a number of bee diseases, including severe infestations by two kinds of mites, American beekeepers have been suffering an economic downturn for the past few years.

"Some of us are in a no-profit situation already," Horace Bell told me as he spread his toast with honey. Bell, who is from De Land, Florida, runs one of the largest beekeeping operations in the United States. "The other day, I'm riding down I-95, heading to Miami with five loads of bees, with my



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three daughters and two sons-in-law, and I looked out there and saw my grandson and my daughters, and they're all in the bee business, they grew up in it, and that's gonna be their life, too. I don't want this damn Africanization thing to ruin all that."

After breakfast, the American scientists—Dr. William L. Rubink and Dr. William T. Wilson, both of them from the Weslaco A.R.S. lab—arranged for the beekeepers to meet with some officials of the Africanized-bee program in Tabasco. The Mexican officials told the group that the first Africanized bees had arrived in Tabasco in 1987, when there were about a hundred and seventy-five beekeepers in the state. Many beekeepers found the fierce new bees impossible to manage, and now, with the state almost entirely Africanized, about fifty beekeepers had gone out of business; the remaining ones were having a rough time. (That sort of thing has happened repeatedly in South and Central America—especially in places where there was little preparation for Africanized bees, and where governments had held to an "it can't happen here" philosophy until it was too late. In many regions, beekeepers have given up when their apiaries became Africanized, and have sold or abandoned their stocks. After two or three years, the industry has usually started to reëstablish itself, but along different lines and often with different people.)

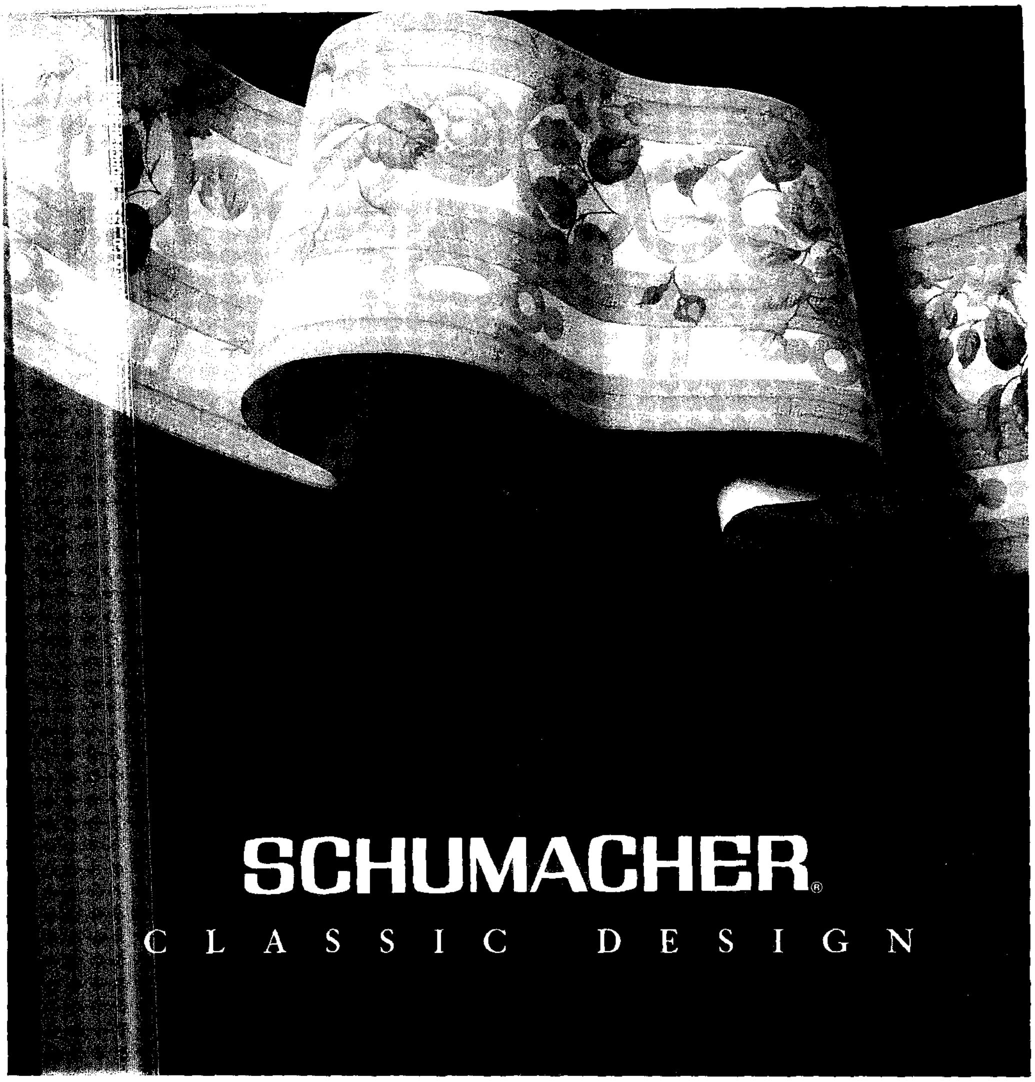
After meeting with the officials, we climbed into our vehicles and set off toward the coast. Villahermosa is situated in a region of tropical forests, where guavas and bananas and mangoes grow not far from Mayan ruins. As we drove along a road lined with dense foliage, past coconut palms and cacao plantations, the beekeepers told me about two large apiaries they had visited in northern Mexico, at the beginning of the trip. One was run by David Cardozo, whose apiaries are in Nuevo León, not far from the United States border, and the other by Oscar Barraza, whose apiaries are near Veracruz. Both men had told the visitors that they were considering getting out of the business. "Cardozo is being squeezed out for economic reasons, and Barraza is going through the same thing—he's gone from seventeen thousand colonies down to two thousand over the last couple of years," Jim Smith told me. Smith, a plainspoken Arizonan in his sixties, went on to say, "He's had it. It's not the bees that have done it—it's the government regulations and red tape that Mexican beekeepers have had to put up with since Africanization. And, hey—Barraza told us how some people in Mexico have found a way to get rich quick. You take a sick old horse and tether it near your neighbor's beeyard. Then you wait till the bees sting it to death. And then you sue your neighbor. This has worked in Mexico, and even when it doesn't work it drives the beekeeper crazy."

Whether people in Arkansas or Georgia would pull the sick-horse stunt remains to be seen, but there is no question that American beekeepers are worried about the reaction of their neighbors and of the public to the advent of AHBs. Eli Mendes—a thirty-one-year-old beekeeper who, with his brother, runs a large honey and pollination business in Massachusetts and Florida—said, gesturing with a hand that was puffy from stings, "To be a beekeeper, you have to be an extremely self-motivated person, and there aren't many young people taking it up these days. In our company, we truck bees to Florida for nine months, where they make orange honey, and then gallberry and palmetto. In May, we truck them back to New England for blueberries and cranberries. People should be on our side—the more beekeepers you have, the fewer wild colonies an area can support. And we know how to handle bees—we can *protect* a community. But, like everybody else in this van, I'm apprehensive. The Africanized bee doesn't scare us one bit. What scares us is restrictive regulations by some panicky officials back in the States. We can't end up like lepers."

In the United States, which has the world's most highly developed beekeeping industry, there are around two hundred thousand beekeepers, managing more than four million colonies. Only about two thousand of those people run full-time commercial operations. A few thousand more run sideline businesses, and the rest are amateurs or hobbyists, who typically have a few—or, at most, a few dozen—hives. Commercial beekeepers, like the ones on the trip, tend to be as deeply involved in managing bees as full-time farmers are in raising crops. These beekeepers frequently move their bees over long distances, and they generally engage in two kinds of income-producing activities. One is the sale of honey and various by-products, such as royal jelly and beeswax, and the other is pollination. Some commercial beekeepers specialize in one or the other, and some engage in both. In economic terms, however, the value of honey is greatly overshadowed by that of pollination. Each year, the sales of honey and other products in the United States amount to about two hundred million dollars, while the annual value of honeybee pollination has been estimated at more than nine billion dollars. There are also a few companies that service other beekeepers by rearing selected stocks and shipping queens or small, nuclear colonies—"nucs"—from one part of the country to another.

After driving some forty miles through a region of coconut palms and avocados, we reached a queen-breeding station of the Sociedad Apicola de Tabasco, where, in a small laboratory, we watched a demonstration of artificial insemination, performed with fine-tuned equipment under a microscope. In an adjoining apiary, we got into protective clothing, and the beekeepers went on to open several hives, removing frames, gauging the amount of honey and brood, picking out some bees and studying them, and finding the queen and judging her condition. Those bees, which our Sociedad Apicola hosts described as hybrids, were relatively docile, but I knew that it was risky to draw conclusions, since there can be considerable variation in both the appearance and the behavior of AHBs. The ones I saw later in Brazil, for instance, looked both larger and darker. And the same bees can behave differently in different conditions—when they are moved from one climatic zone to another, for example. Also, some scientists suspect that, as Africanized bees migrate, the bees near the front have more African qualities than the ones several miles back, where there has been more time for hybridization.

In the afternoon, we visited more apiaries, containing bees that could be described as ill-tempered—but no more so than a lot of European bees—and by the time we returned to the hotel that evening the beekeepers were in an



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upbeat mood, saying things like "We've been through two-thirds of Mexico now, and we haven't seen anything we can't handle."

The next morning was hot and humid, and soon after breakfast we were on the road again. When we had travelled about twenty-five miles, past extensive forests of deep-green palms and thick underbrush, we stopped to investigate what appeared to be an abandoned apiary on a hillside not far from the road. Most of the beekeepers had brought full body suits, with connected veils—sturdier garments than they might use at home—and after putting them on they climbed about a hundred yards through high grasses and thick foliage to a ragged clearing where fifteen very worn-looking wooden hives stood, mostly in tiers of three boxes each. Using their smokers and hive tools—all-purpose metal objects about eight inches long, with spatulate tips—the men began working the hives. At a glance, these bees, like the ones the day before, were not very different in appearance from a lot of European honeybees. Smallish, and with black heads and thoraxes and orange abdomens that gleamed in the sun, they clustered on the combs in shimmering masses, sometimes festooning—forming a dollop of bees which suspends itself from a comb—or dropping off and taking flight. Soon a few thousand bees were buzzing around us and clustering on our white suits, and within a couple of minutes Paul Ziegler, a seventy-eight-year-old beekeeper from Pennsylvania, was walking around with a moving carpet of bees on his shoulders and back. By the time the beekeepers had opened three hives, tens of thousands of bees were in the air. They flew from the hives in dark, fulminant droves, filling the air like some small but focussed storm cloud, and making a pulsating, weirdly erratic whine as they followed each other's complex signalling and attacked us—or, more precisely, attacked our suits, implanting stingers in the heavy fabric.

As Richard Adee adjusted the cover on a hive, bees seemed to boil into the air, and he shouted, "I can see why no one's taking care of this yard! These are not the kind of bees we want!"

Another man shouted back, "You can smell the venom!"

Horace Bell went on to open another hive, while his wife, Louella—the only woman in the group—taped the scene with a camcorder. A beekeeper from New Mexico said, "Old Dr. Kerr, down in Brazil, he didn't know what he was starting, did he?"

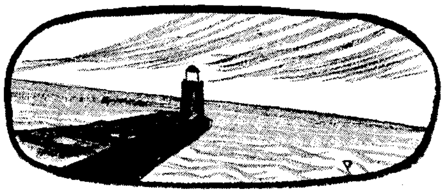
Within about three minutes, some of the men were getting stung repeatedly; at places where clothing pulls tight, bees can sting through layers of fabric. Joe Holt, a young beekeeper from Washington State, said, "I've had enough," and started back down the hill. Soon all the beekeepers had retreated toward the vehicles, but clouds of bees pursued us right down to the road, making an insistent whine as they continued their attack. (A honeybee can sting only once. After a worker bee has left her stinger in a victim, she soon dies. Workers—females that are normally sterile—are by far the most numerous bees in a colony and are the only bees that sting in colony defense. Queens use their stingers only against other queens, and males, or drones, have no stingers.) The bees showed no sign of calming down, and we scrambled back into the vehicles and took off our suits, swatting at a few dozen bees that had entered the van and were zooming around our heads like shotgun pellets gone wild. As we drove off, my companions caught the errant bees and squashed them with their fingers.

Joe Holt said, "I wouldn't blame the people in these little towns around here if somebody got stung up and they just went and burned those beeyards."

Horace Bell said, "If my grandchild was riding along on a burro and got stung up, I guarantee somebody would regret it."

Jim Smith seemed more equable. Displaying a pair of fingerless gloves, which make it easier to work with a frame of bees, he said, "These gloves are the greatest thing since Grandma got a clothes dryer. What am I riding with—a bunch of hoeheads?"

Around four that afternoon, we arrived at a village not far from a copra plantation. Outside a ramshackle store, an old man with a leathery face was sitting on a bee box—the type of box that forms part of a movable-frame hive. We stopped to speak with the man, and he told us that he kept thirty colonies of bees in the foothills, some fifteen miles away. The beekeepers questioned him about honey production, and he replied that he sometimes got as much as two hundred pounds a hive annually—a figure that obviously whetted the Americans' interest, since in the United States a hundred pounds a hive is considered a very good harvest. However, the man also said that in that region the honey flow—the period of flowering, when bees are able to produce significant amounts of honey—lasts about nine months. In most parts of the United States, the honey flow lasts only two or three months.



When we asked the man on the bee box if we might visit his apiary, he said that we might, but he could not accompany us. A young man who works with him, David Cruz Lopez, agreed to take us. Cruz got into one of the pickups, and two young boys—friends of his—got into the other, and soon we were all heading up a badly rutted, muddy road into the hills. As we bounced along, Cruz explained that he had seventy hives of his own, farther into the hills, and that, like all the bees in this area, his had become considerably Africanized during the past couple of years. "They are hard to handle," he continued. "But they are worth it, because they give me so much honey. *Son bravas, esas abejas.*" The late afternoon was already beginning to show signs of dusk, and the vehicles lurched and groaned over what was at times a nonexistent road; occasionally, they had to bulldoze their way through bushes or bend back the branches of saplings to get through. After about forty-five minutes, we arrived at a large open spot, and we stopped and got out. To our left was the apiary, on a sloping patch of land bordered with shrubbery and containing about thirty wooden hives with flaking gray paint.

The beekeepers got back into their suits and set about inspecting the hives, while Dr. Rubink and his Mexican associates collected samples of bees in glass jars and vials, for analysis back in the Weslaco lab. The beekeepers were not able to work the hives for long, however, because these bees—like the ones we had seen in the morning—almost immediately went on the attack. A colony of honeybees can contain as many as eighty thousand individuals, and each colony might

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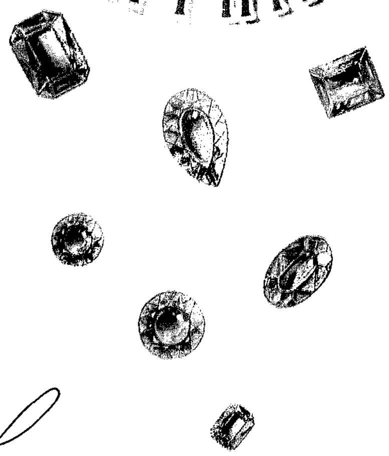

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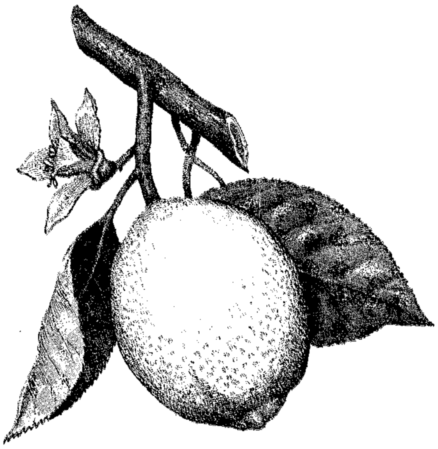

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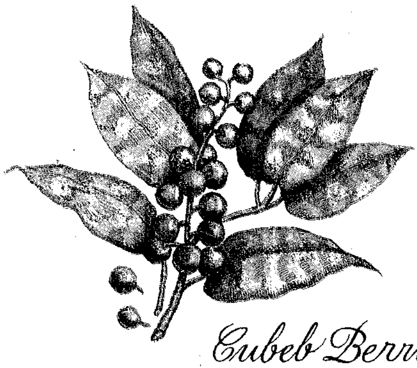
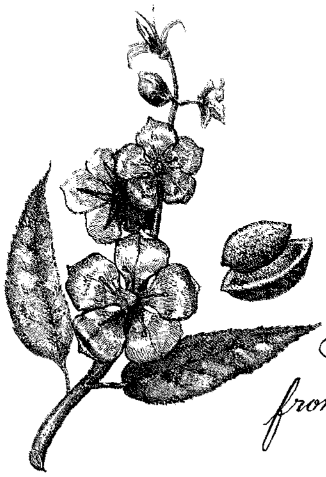


Cubeb Berries
from Java



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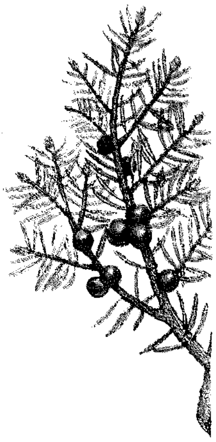

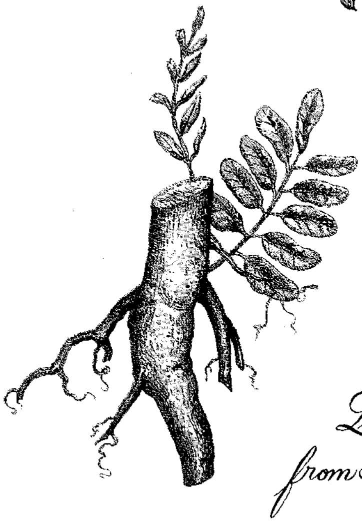

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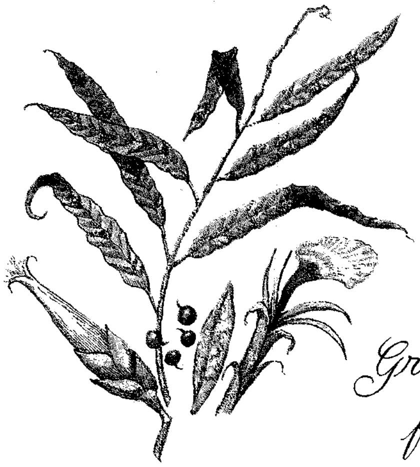

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send out half of its members in a defensive response, so there were soon hundreds of thousands of bees swirling around us. People were being stung again, and as I bent over to look at the hives I began getting stings on my shoulders and neck, and—when I recklessly removed a glove—a rapid-fire series of stings on my left hand.

By now, the beekeepers were beginning to make a judicious retreat, but the two young boys who had accompanied Cruz were not wearing protective clothing—in fact, both wore sandals and one was shirtless—and as the air grew thick with bees their exposed skin was quickly becoming covered with bees, which crawled over their arms and into their hair and nostrils and ears. The boys began running down the dirt road, screaming "*Pica! Pica!*" and slapping at their arms and faces. Several of the men ran after them, threw shirts or sweaters over them, and ran with them till they could outdistance the bees. Eventually, with garments wrapped around them, the boys returned to the vehicles, and we headed back down the mountain in the dark.

WE arrived at Chetumal, the capital of Quintana Roo, on Saturday night, and after a late dinner Dr. Wilson and Dr. Rubink and I sat around for a while over coffee. Bill Wilson, who is in his late fifties, has been at the Weslaco A.R.S. lab for the past seven years. Bill Rubink, who is forty-four, is a behavioral entomologist, and over the past several years has been working in Weslaco's Subtropical Agricultural Research Lab. Among other things, he helped the government of the state of Tamaulipas lay out a trap line that runs for some two hundred miles through northeastern Mexico. Bill Wilson remarked that a number of American scientists have been looking at developments in Argentina, regarding it as a model for what may happen in North America, since that country's latitudes are a mirror image of those in the United States. In Argentina, Africanized bees have progressed through tropical regions but have pretty much come to a halt on reaching the temperate zone. Bill Rubink said, "I think Mexico has handled the problem about as well as any country so far. It has sent beekeepers into the schools, and has flooded TV and radio with announcements.

"Before Carlo did us, we thought the whole nineteenth century was clunky."

• •

Today, everybody in Mexico knows about Africanized bees and how to deal with them. But then people here are a lot more at ease with insects than people back home, where there has always been a pretty high degree of entomophobia. A lot of Americans would be delighted if we had zapped the bees with napalm—the way they do in 'killer bee' movies—or, anyway, if the B.R.Z. had worked."

The B.R.Z., or Bee Regulated Zone, is considered by the U.S.D.A.'s critics to have been among its more spectacular follies. Soon after Africanized bees first appeared in the state of Chiapas, in December, 1986, the U.S.D.A., acting through its Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, or APHIS, began working with Mexico's agricultural authority to set up a biological barrier across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, which is about a hundred and twenty miles wide. The B.R.Z., running between the Pacific Ocean and the Gulf of Mexico, provided an opportunity for trying out such measures as trapping and destroying Africanized swarms, requeening managed colonies, and flooding the region with European drones. The United States and Mexico each contributed more than four million dollars to the program, in the hope of stopping the bees, or, at the very least, retarding their progress. However, it soon became evident that the bees were not going to be stopped. Though they may have been slowed a bit—and though the B.R.Z.'s trap lines have helped monitor the bees' movements—nearly everyone involved now admits that the program got off the ground with too little money and manpower, and at a time when Africanized bees were already in the ascendancy.

Bill Rubink went on to tell me about twenty thousand plastic traps that the coöperative program had bought, all of which turned out to be ineffective and are now sitting in a warehouse. Other scientists, with obvious amusement, had told me of similar gaffes. But then, I was learning, sniping at policies or agencies or individuals has become common these days in the world of apiculture. Beekeepers, many of whom have spent their lives learning by firsthand experience, tend to disagree not only with scientists but with each other. And in the realm of scientific bee studies in the United States there has been for years now a surprising amount of fault-finding, finger-pointing, and reputation-bashing over Africanization. Many academic scientists have not hesitated to criticize the U.S.D.A.'s rather combative approach to the Africanized bees, and some government scientists have privately expressed views contrary to the ones they are employed to promote. One government bee researcher told me recently, "Some people in my lab don't speak to each other anymore." A few years ago, a famous feud between two American bee scientists came close to blows, and lately a certain well-known rivalry has become so acerbic that sponsors of conferences are reluctant to invite the two antagonists to the same function. Encountering so much feistiness, I began to wonder whether something in the nature of Africanized bees was rubbing off on people.

Feistiness may soon be expected in another arena, too, as Africanized bees continue to spread into North America. A researcher from Colombia, Dr. José Villa, who is currently working at the Baton Rouge A.R.S. lab, told me, "Latin cultures have a tendency to adapt to whatever ill things come their way. European-type cultures have more of a tendency to wipe out the problem. Not only are the bees going to be somewhat different in the United States but the people—the society—are going to be interacting with the problem very differently, too, and you can expect to see experts turning up not only on TV but in courtrooms." Dr. Anita Collins spoke to me of the same phenomenon. "Sooner or later, we're going to have some serious stinging incidents," she said. "And that's where the beekeeper's neighbor comes in, and where the public comes in. And it's one thing that our beekeepers are really worried about. In the Latin countries, if some guy over there doesn't like your bees he'll burn your colonies. Or he'll go after you with a machete—that happened to Dr. Tom Rinderer, when he was working in Venezuela. But here the guy doesn't reach for his machete—he calls his lawyer."

EARLY Sunday morning, we hit the road again, and I rode beside Bill Wilson, who was driving one of the pickups. He reminded me that even the best-informed predictions are subject to doubt, since so much depends on biology and mating patterns—matters that are dauntingly complex. For one thing, honeybees do not reproduce in the same way that chimpanzees or rats, or even butterflies, do, and you cannot breed them in the same way you breed Airedales or Holsteins. Honeybees have the distinction of being haplodiploid insects. The female eggs that the queen lays have been fertilized by the semen she carries within her; those eggs are diploid, possessing two sets of chromosomes (like all mammals, birds, reptiles, and fish, and many other insects). The diploid females develop into workers or queens. Occasionally, the queen lays diploid male eggs, but those males never reach maturity—before they emerge, they are killed by workers. The vast majority of male eggs a queen lays are unfertilized; they are haploid, possessing one set of chromosomes—her own. And those eggs develop into drones. Genetically speaking, a drone is a clone of its mother, and when a queen mates it is as if she were mating with another queen.

The puzzle gets still thornier when the interplay between managed and feral colonies is taken into account. No matter how hard a beekeeper may work to control the breeding of his bees—by frequent requeening, for example, or through artificial insemination—he or she is well aware that honeybees lead relatively unfettered lives. Not long after emerging, a queen bee stages one or more nuptial flights, travelling a mile or so from her hive and mating in midair, some forty feet above the ground. After mating with anywhere from seven to seventeen drones, she returns to her nest to begin laying eggs. Because of the distances she and the drones fly, there is a strong probability that she will mate with males from a different colony. Having stored up enough semen for a lifetime, she never mates again but goes on to lay millions of eggs over the next two or three years, or until she is superseded. While a queen is extraordinarily long-lived, a worker lives only a few weeks, and a drone a few months. Very few drones succeed in mating—most are eventually expelled from the hive by workers—and the rare drone that does mate is rewarded by dying immediately after ejaculating. As a result of all these factors, trying to modify AHBs genetically has turned out to be a frustrating task: what wo[illegible] in the lab does not necessarily work in the wild, partly because apiary bees are inevitably linked to bees in nearby fields and forests.

Near Orange Walk, Belize, we drove past grass shacks and fields of sugarcane, and trudged through pineapple and coconut groves and tangled thickets to look at still more apiaries, some in an advanced state of disrepair, and some abandoned. From local authorities we learned that in 1987, before

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Africanization reached Belize, there had been six hundred beekeepers in the country, and now there were ninety-seven. They also told us that Africanized bees had been responsible for four deaths in the country so far. In the afternoon, Bill Wilson made a hasty retreat from an apiary, brushing off a blanket of bees from his shoulders and trying to dislodge a frenzied ball—it looked like a glittering cluster of yellow-and-black beads—from his camera. Not long afterward, Bill Rubink dashed out of one exceptionally agitated apiary, struggling with two bees that had somehow got under his veil and were threatening his eyes.

Jim Smith said, "Well, those bees are a little pecky."

Shortly before the trip, a friend had warned me that the beekeepers would probably not manage to stick it out for more than a few days. "Beekeepers are not inherently gregarious," my friend had said. "They're opinionated, crusty, and mostly holdovers from the days of rugged individualism. There's no way fifteen beekeepers are going to travel together for a week, riding side by side, without fireworks." As it happened, there were no fireworks, but on Tuesday, eight days into the trip, the beekeepers decided to scrap their itinerary and split into three groups—an act that Dr. Rubink, smiling, later referred to as "the mutiny." One group of beekeepers rented a car and headed toward Guatemala. A second group, under Dr. Wilson's tutelage, took the van and a pickup and set off for Yucatán. Dr. Rubink and his two Mexican colleagues kept the other pickup and remained in Belize. I flew back to New York.

WHEN Africanization first became a matter for concern, Warwick Estevam Kerr made himself readily accessible to the media, but in recent years he has become less willing to grant interviews, partly because he has been repeatedly distressed by "killer bee" stories and other sensational approaches to the subject. After retiring from his position at the University of São Paulo at Ribeirão Prêto, in 1981, he moved to São Luis, on Brazil's northeastern coast, and there took a position as a professor of genetics at the Federal University of Maranhão. He became president of the university in 1987, and three years ago he decided to "retire" once more, this time to Uberlândia, in the mountainous state of Minas Gerais, about two hundred and fifty miles south of Brasília, and to accept still another teaching post, at the Federal University of Uberlândia. He is now being considered for the post of that university's president. Over the past decade or so, Professor Kerr has received numerous honors and awards, and last year he was elected to the United States' National Academy of Sciences, becoming the only Brazilian to achieve that distinction.

Through the intercession of an entomologist friend of mine, Professor Kerr agreed to see me, and one morning last April I stopped by his office in the Federal University's Department of Biomedical Sciences. Now sixty-nine, he is a robust-looking, dark-haired man with a forthright manner who peers intently from behind horn-rimmed glasses. On the walls of his office, which was cluttered, were many maps, diplomas, photographs, certificates, and hand-printed aphorisms, one of which read "*O professor que deixa de ser aluno deixa de ser professor*" ("The teacher who stops being a student stops being a teacher") and was credited to "Kerr, 1946." Settling behind his desk, Dr. Kerr told me that he currently teaches in two general areas. One is plant breeding—he has done a great deal of work to increase the Vitamin A content of lettuce, which is a staple food of the population of northern Brazil—and the other is meliponids, or stingless bees, which are native to Brazil, and which have interested him for most of his professional life. In fact, it is principally his work with the genetics of stingless bees that has gained him accolades.

I knew that Dr. Kerr had American antecedents. Now he told me that his great-grandfather had died fighting for the Confederacy. "The Kerrs are Scottish, and my branch had settled in Memphis, Tennessee, but in 1865 my grandfather moved the family to southern Brazil," he said. "I grew up mostly in the state of São Paulo, and I eventually enrolled in the University of São Paulo at Piracicaba, about seventy-five miles north of the city of São Paulo. That's where I fell in love with genetics." In 1951, after receiving a postdoctoral degree, he came to the United States for further studies, which included two semesters of work at Columbia University with Theodosius Dobzhansky, the renowned Russian-born geneticist. (One result of Dr. Kerr's stay in the United States is that he named his eldest son Americo Adlai.)

I said, "In the States, there have been conflicting stories told about the origin of Africanized bees back in the fifties. What really happened?"

Dr. Kerr toyed with a small medal—one of his awards—and said, "From the United States I returned to Piracicaba. In 1956, when I was thirty-four, I won Brazil's national prize for genetics. With the award money I bought a microscope and a ticket to Africa, where I intended to study the cytology of stingless bees. Then some people at the Ministry of Agriculture asked me to do something for them. They had heard of the high productivity of the bees in southern Africa, and they asked me to import some queen bees from Angola, South Africa, and Tanzania, hoping to use them in improving the bees we had in Brazil. One reason they wanted me—rather than a beekeeper—to take charge of the queens was that the government knew I would be careful not to introduce, along with the queens, the various mites and coleopterans and other parasites the bees might have. I arranged for the shipment of the queens from Angola, but they all died on the way. The Ministry people had also ordered about a hundred and thirty queens from South Africa. Well, when I got to Pretoria the queens had already been selected by South African beekeepers, as representing their best colonies, and they were packaged and ready to go. I brought them back myself, by ship. Some died during the voyage, and by the time I landed at Rio de Janeiro just seventy-five were still living.

"In Rio, a man from the Ministry was waiting to receive the bees. I told him, 'Look, these bees are very productive, but they are very, very fierce in comparison with the German bees—*A. m. mellifera*—which our beekeepers have here.' So we decided to quarantine the imports, and since there were no suitable facilities in the Rio area the official asked me to take the bees to Rio Claro, which is about two hundred miles inland. Near Rio Claro, the Paulista Railroad Company had an enormous eucalyptus forest. We put the bees there, with the intention of making crosses between the African bees and *ligustica*, the gentler, Italian strain. We burned all the original boxes, again making sure that we had not inadvertently introduced parasites, and after carefully examining each African queen we introduced her into an Italian nucleus. We did not lose any queens during this phase, but soon afterward we eliminated some who were not laying well, and finally we were left with a small group, twenty-eight or twenty-nine African queens. The next step was to breed queens from the best of the Africans, and we did this through artificial insemination with semen from Italian drones. That gave us our first-generation crosses, which geneticists call F-1s. In producing our F-1s, we ended by using one queen much more than the others. That queen had originated in Tanzania, rather than South Africa, and her daughters proved to be more productive than the others, and had less of a tendency to abscond, but, unfortunately, they also turned out to be fiercer.

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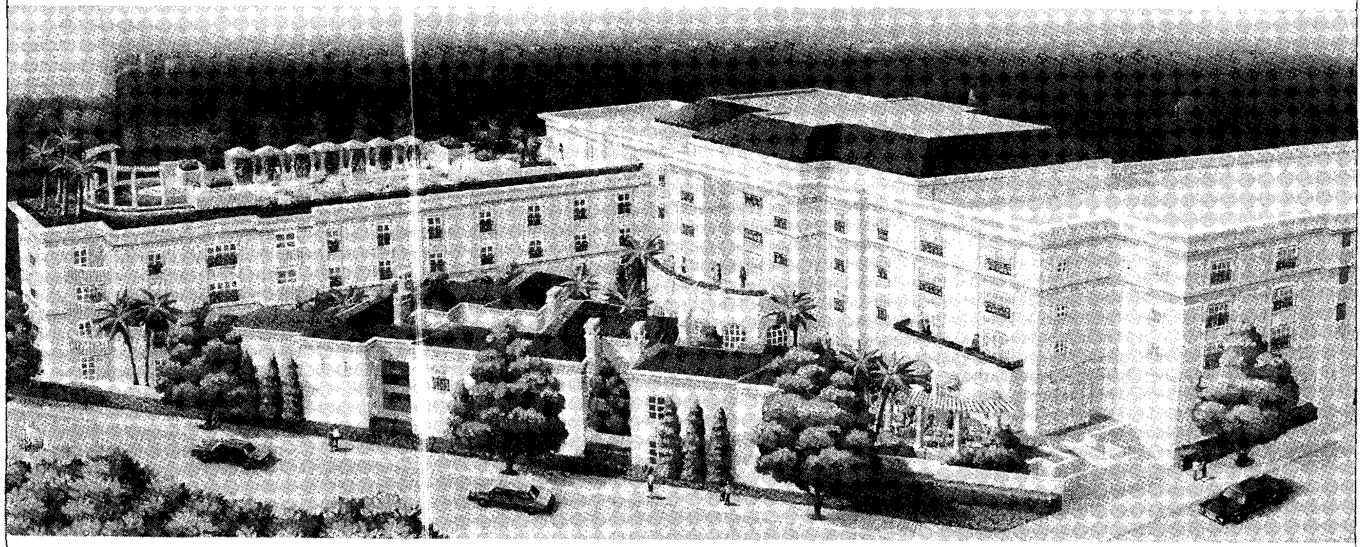

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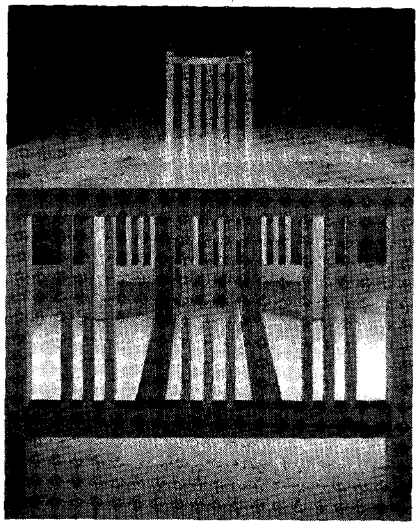

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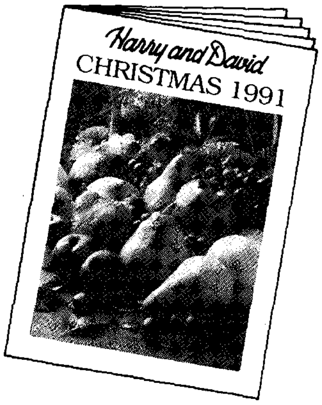

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cluder—a screen that, because of the size of its holes, permits workers to come and go but prevents the much larger queen, and the drones, from leaving the hive. One day in the fall of 1957, a serious accident occurred. A beekeeper happened to visit the Rio Claro apiary. Not realizing that the bees were quarantined, he removed the queen excluders, since it is normal procedure to do so once a queen has started laying. As a result of his action, twenty-six of the African queens left their hives, with accompanying swarms, leaving behind daughter queens in charge of the hives. And that's how the Africanization of the continent began. Those twenty-six swarms established themselves in the wild and soon began mating with the honeybees already there."

A student came in to discuss an experiment with bee pupae. Dr. Kerr decided to see things for himself, so we moved to a laboratory across the hall, and Dr. Kerr looked through a microscope at the glistening white pupae and commented on their condition. From the lab Dr. Kerr led me down some stairs and outside. As we walked toward a small brick building containing more experimental equipment, he returned to the subject of the original introduction of Africanized bees: "Today, research on such things as mitochondrial DNA indicates that the influence of the African queens was more important than that of the European drones, but I don't think we should underestimate the importance of the drones, either. Some of those drones were Italian, but most were of the German strain. And if each of the daughter queens of the twenty-six swarms was inseminated by as many as seventeen drones, which is probable, that would have fantastically increased the genetic plasticity and viability of the population. In any case, the hybrids that resulted from these matings began spreading rapidly, and we soon began to see significant changes in bees in much of southern Brazil."

I remarked that some American scientists had told me that they doubted whether the rapid takeover of so much territory by Africanized bees could have resulted from the accidental introduction of twenty-six queens—that they were convinced that there must have been some other means of introducing AHBs into the environment, and that the most probable means was intentional distribution.

"I have heard those comments, too," Dr. Kerr replied. "Well, it's true that we gave some of the daughter queens to beekeepers before the accident, because they were eager to try them. And back then I probably didn't give enough consideration to the strengths of those African bees. I thought they would interbreed freely with other bees and get diluted—I didn't realize they would be so much more viable than the Europeans. But there was never any *widespread* distribution of African bees. In all, I believe we gave twenty F-1 queens to beekeepers in São Paulo State. Some of those beekeepers killed the queens after finding they were too fierce. Eventually, five or six queens remained in the hands of beekeepers, and those queens may have contributed slightly to Africanization. But the colonization of the continent really needs no other explanation than the fact that the African swarms quickly proved dominant and led to a race of astonishingly successful hybrids. There was a rapid migration rate during the initial phase of expansion—African bees can travel for up to sixty miles when they swarm, while European ones usually travel no more than nine miles—and that probably favored hybridization at different rates in different regions. You can see the influence of the German strain, for instance, in the dark-colored bees we have now in southern Brazil. They look very different from the original African bees, which were much yellower.

"Of course, it wasn't long before we began hearing of the first cases—very isolated cases—of bees' killing farm animals, and then there were more reports, and, finally, the first human fatalities. That was terrible. As soon as we could, we established a close working relationship with Brazil's beekeepers, bringing people together to exchange information and advice. In the first year or so, we tried distributing impregnated Italian queens to beekeepers, but it's interesting to note that that didn't work, and the reason was that the beekeepers were already beginning to prefer African bees, because of their high honey production. The beekeepers ended up killing the Italian queens we gave them. Meanwhile, the situation wasn't being helped by the publication of irresponsible reports in the press. At first, the Brazilian media picked up some stories of bee attacks and exaggerated them grotesquely, and before long the press in other countries followed suit. I believe the name 'killer bee' first appeared in *Time* magazine, in 1965, and of course it has now become a common term in the English-speaking world. But the equivalent term—*abelha assassina*—is almost unknown here in Brazil."

Dr. Kerr went on to explain that after the African queens escaped, Brazil's Ministry of Agriculture declared that it had no more interest in the project. Nevertheless, he and his associates decided to continue studying the African bees they still had at Rio Claro.

Several of his graduate students—including Lionel Gonçalves and another leading Brazilian entomologist, Antonio Carlos Stort—worked with the pure Africans, and such studies continued through the nineteen-fifties. In 1958, Dr. Kerr was invited to be a founder of a branch of the State University at São Paulo, at Rio Claro. By 1960, Dr. Kerr told me, all the pure-African bees had been eliminated. And by then he had moved to the university at Ribeirão Prêto. During this period, he and his group were taking active measures to help beekeepers handle the Africanized bees. From 1962 to 1970, Dr. Kerr spent his own money to acquire and distribute eighteen thousand virgin Italian queens throughout Brazil, and, unlike the first distribution, these queens were accepted by the beekeepers, and went on to mate with Africanized drones. As a result, bees in Brazil began to show clear signs of becoming less defensive. "At first, there was a decline in beekeeping here, and that was partly because most of the amateurs dropped out," Dr. Kerr said. "Then, as the years went by, Brazilian beekeeping gradually began to come back."

Over lunch in a *churrascaria*, or barbecue restaurant, Dr. Kerr told me that, as a lifelong socialist, he had always been active in politics, and that during the decade and a half when Brazil was under a military dictatorship—from 1964 to 1979—the time he was able to spend on his work had often been limited by underground activities he carried out. In those years, when countless Brazilians were tortured, killed, or "disappeared," Dr. Kerr helped many dissidents leave

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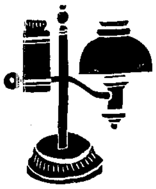
the country, hiding some in his house for a while, and eventually finding refuge for them and others in Argentina or Ecuador. He was jailed twice—once for putting pressure on officials to stop torturing people during a railroad strike, and once for speaking out in his classroom against torture—and, despite ongoing harassment and death threats against his wife and children, he continued to fight the regime. In 1965, he won the national genetics prize for the second time. In 1969, he was elected president of the Brazilian Association for the Advancement of Science, and two years later he was reëlected. More than once, officials of the military government, reluctant to make a martyr of such a prominent figure, suggested that he leave the country. He always refused to do so. For these reasons as well as for his academic accomplishments, many of his countrymen regard him as a hero.



One warm afternoon, I visited Dr. Kerr and his wife, Dona Lygia, at their home, a tile-roofed white stucco house on an acre of land heavily planted with trees, shrubs, and flowers, on the outskirts of Uberlândia. Dona Lygia is a small, animated woman, and as we sat talking in the living room she told me that, for the first time in their forty-four years together, she had been the one to choose their new home, and had selected Uberlândia, because it was an attractive and clean little city with a good climate. Later, Dr. Kerr led me out into a large, palm-shaded garden. As we strolled past plots of vegetables, which he had imported from various parts of the world, he said, "In a couple of weeks, we're going to get Africanized swarms in the house, probably about twenty of them. It happens every year, and they haven't killed the cat yet." He smiled and then turned sombre. "At the beginning of all this, throughout the nineteen-sixties—when there were so many stinging incidents, and it was becoming clear how great a threat Africanized bees were—I got very, very depressed. It was very difficult to cope with the fact that people were dying because of those bees. Even now—well, in the past year the bees caused three deaths in Brazil. One was that of a boy who climbed a mango tree, not knowing there was a nest in it. When the bees attacked him, he fell and fractured his skull. The bees got into his mouth and lungs, and he died in the hospital at Ribeirão Prêto. That was tragic. But it is important to remember that such accidents happen with other kinds of bees, too. And, of course, when people die from wasp or hornet stings bees are often blamed for the death, so the toll has been inflated from the start.

"Things began to change here around 1970. In fact, in the seventies there was a complete change in attitude, and there was really a boom in beekeeping. A new generation of beekeepers began to take over in Brazil, and, with techniques that we had helped develop, they began to thrive, and the bees' less desirable qualities began to be bred out. Today, our beekeepers overwhelmingly prefer Africanized bees, which—when they're properly managed—are really not much more defensive than other kinds of bees. And do you know how hard these bees work? I have never seen European bees work at night—never—but on one very bright night, many years ago, at three in the morning, in the eucalyptus forest at Rio Claro, I heard Africanized bees working in the blossoming trees, gathering nectar in the moonlight. The amount of beekeeping in Brazil used to be almost negligible, and now beekeeping has become an important industry. Today, Brazil is the second honey producer in South America, and the seventh in the world—after China, the Soviet Union, the United States, Mexico, Canada, and Argentina. And Africanization has brought other benefits, too, because we have learned a tremendous amount about genetics. I organized the first beekeeping congress in this country, back around 1970, bringing beekeepers and scientists together for discussions. It drew about a hundred and fifty people. Last year, in Florianópolis, our beekeeping congress drew about twenty-five hundred people. Through my teaching, I have now turned out about twenty-five doctorates, twenty-two of them in bee science, and also twenty-eight master's degrees. And to see my former students at these congresses is a great pleasure—I know that they are putting their science at the service of the people."

Facing the house was a shelter within which were several rows of pastel-colored wooden hives. We walked toward them, and Dr. Kerr explained

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that they contained thirty-four colonies of *Melipona scutellaris*, the type of stingless bee on which he is now concentrating. The meliponids were black, and he approached a hive and allowed several of them to crawl over his hand as he told me that the honey they produce is quite good, though a bit watery.

As the bees wandered over his skin, he watched them with a bemused expression, turning his wrist as they crawled up his forearm. Then he glanced at me and said, "Now I really believe that—after so many difficult years—it is clear that the Africanized bee is not a bad bee, and that it has brought many difficulties but also many benefits. Not long ago, the people of Mozambique gave me a special award, for lifelong achievement, and in 1989 I was elected honorary president of Apimondia, the international society of bee scientists. I've been named an honorary citizen of more places than I can keep track of, and received more awards than I can count. I live here with the best wife in the world, and we have seven children and fourteen grandchildren. Despite the many problems we have had, the end result has been very positive, both for me and for Brazil. As I look back today, I am satisfied with my life, and with my work."

Still, I asked, if he could live his life over again, would he do anything differently?

The meliponids continued to crawl over his forearm, reached the bend of his elbow, and kept advancing. Finally, Dr. Kerr let the stingless bees drop back into their nest, shaking the last ones off his fingers onto a little platform at the hive's opening. He said, "I would leave those African bees where I found them."

—WALLACE WHITE

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(CALIFORNIA DIVISION)

[*Letter to the Los Angeles Times Book Review*]

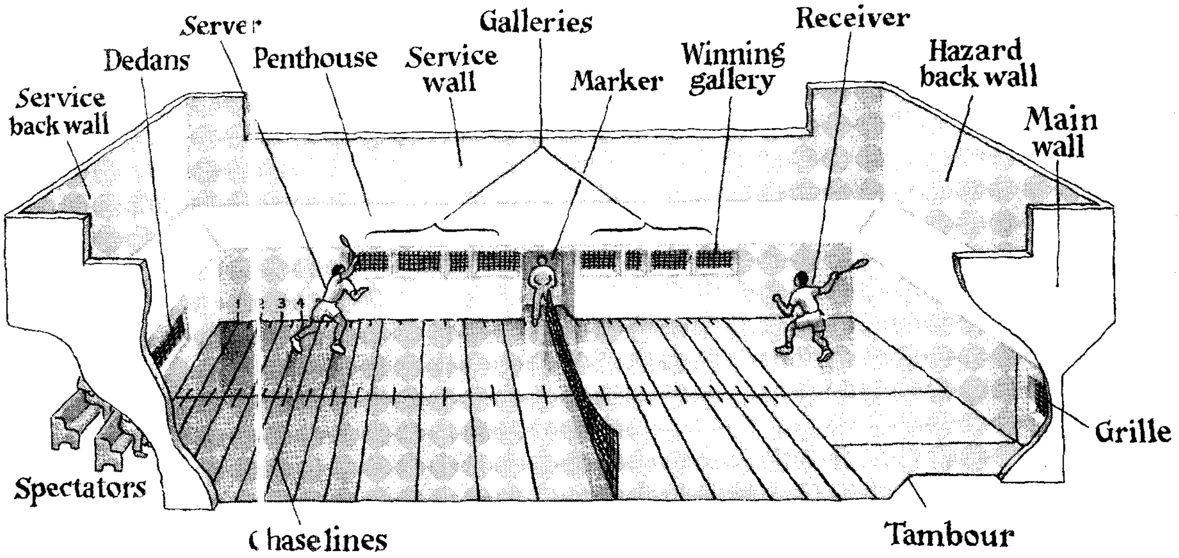
I am doing research for a book and would like to hear from anyone who was born on July 29, 1937, between 3:38 p.m. and 3:42 p.m. (Mountain Time); April 12, 1960 between 3:17 a.m. and 3:21 a.m. (Pacific Time); or on July 11, 1961, between 1:44 p.m. and 1:48 p.m. (Pacific Time).

I do not know whether Daylight Savings Time was in effect, so there could be an additional hour difference when comparing with other time zones.

MARGARET COOK

THE SPORTING SCENE

THE GAME OF KINGS



IT may come as a surprise to the millions of people who call themselves tennis players to learn that they don't know the proper name of their own game. This philistinism is a source of mild irritation to the people who play at the Racquet & Tennis Club, in New York; the National Tennis Club, in Newport, Rhode Island; the Tennis and Racquet Club, in Boston; the Royal Tennis Court, at Hampton Court Palace; the Manchester Tennis and Racquet Club; the Royal Melbourne Tennis Club; the Jeu de Paume du Château de Fontainebleau; and more than twenty-five other places on three continents. E. B. Noel and J. O. M. Clark stated the purists' case with unconcealed exasperation in their two-volume "A History of Tennis," which was published in London in 1923 and remains the bible of tennis arcana. "Now Lawn Tennis *is Lawn Tennis*, and never can be Tennis in English," they wrote. "For Tennis existed many hundred years before lawn tennis was evolved, and it remains to its devotees, and to those who have the true love of ball games, the most wonderful pastime of its kind yet devised by the wit of man." Unfortunately for Noel and Clark and those who share their view, players of tennis as they define it have been forced to make concessions to the language. They call their sport court tennis in the United States, royal tennis in Australia, *jeu de paume* in France, and, most emphatically, *real* tennis in Britain. Court tennis was once known as the game of kings, and because its aristocratic associations persist to this day, its enthusiasts are not sure whether to feel superior or merely eccentric.

Imagine that you are an accomplished lawn-tennis player, which is to say that you put topspin on the ball by hitting low-to-high, that your racquet face is so large that even balls poorly hit float across the net, and that you care little about the color of your shirt and shorts. Imagine, further, that on a late-winter day a friend, an old-fashioned sort, invites you to play court tennis at the venerable Racquet & Tennis Club, on Park Avenue between Fifty-second and Fifty-third Streets. As instructed, you walk past the Strangers Room, where women and guests are quarantined, take the elevator to the third floor, and proceed to the dressing room, at the opposite end of the building from the squash courts, the swimming pool, and the Turkish baths. It is a cavernous, dimly lit room roughly a hundred feet long, forty feet wide, and fifteen feet high. Along its sides are dressing cubicles panelled in dark wood. Above the cubicles are oil paintings of men in tennis dress and giant boards listing the winners of various games played at the club dating back to the last century. Uniformed attendants scurry about, bringing members their sporting gear. At one end of the room, a fire warms men in terry-cloth robes who are taking their lunch at three round tables next to a small bar. The talk strays to a hard-fought Groton-St. Mark's game in 1937. You begin to get the feeling that the years since that game have been one long time-out for the men in this room. Only the showerheads have changed, it seems, for a fellow towelling himself in the corner is reminiscing about the originals—great moons that spewed a heavy, *masculine* rain, not the prissy spray one gets today.

You timidly ask an attendant where you can dress, and he points to an unoccupied cubicle. From your tennis bag you pull out a shirt with a horizontal turquoise stripe across the chest and one red sleeve. Your shorts have more brand markings than you remember. You remind yourself that "tennis whites" haven't been considered fashionable since the heyday of Ted Tinling, forty years ago. After a few wrong turns on the fourth floor, you make your way to the East Court, one of two at the club, to meet your host.

He's already on court, resplendent in cream-colored flannels, a white polo shirt, and an off-white cable-knit sweater with red and blue stripes discreetly edging its V neck. He greets you warmly and hands you a wooden racquet made by Grays of Cambridge. It is roughly the same length as your whippy metal model, but its head has a curious warp and is four or five strings narrower even than the lawn-tennis racquets used in Bill Tilden's day. Your host hands you a white ball, remarking that the head professional made it by hand. He goes on to tell you that it weighs two and a half to two

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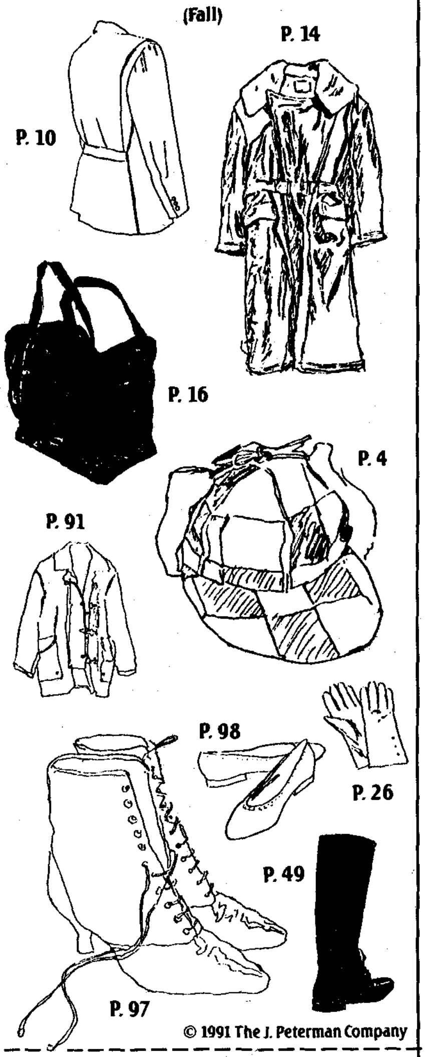

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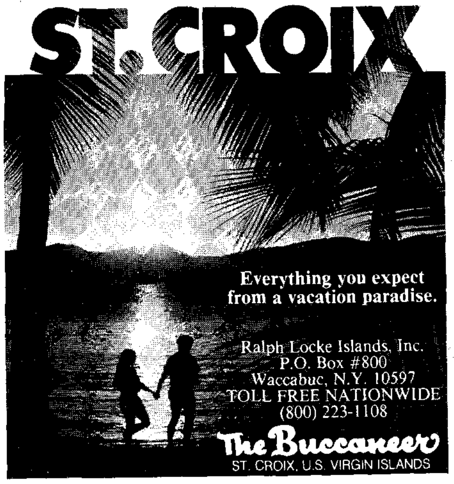

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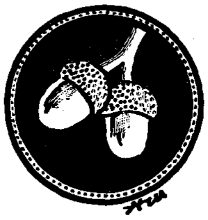
and three-fourths ounces and has a core of cork, which is wrapped with cotton webbing and bound by twine, then covered with white melton cloth and handsewn with linen thread. The stitching, also white, stands out like that on a baseball. This ball is slightly smaller than a lawn-tennis ball but harder and about half an ounce heavier.

Not very different from regular tennis, you tell yourself. Then you raise your eyes to the court. Or what you thought was the court: it is more like the courtyard of a medieval French monastery. Your host seems at home and keen to play in the unusual surroundings. He tells you that the floor surface, which is made of cement, is thirty-two feet by ninety-six, compared with thirty-six feet by seventy-eight for lawn-tennis doubles. It is divided in half by a drooping net that is five feet high at the ends and three feet high in the middle. At both ends of the court and along one side, the walls go up seven feet, then slope away from the court, to make a roof called the penthouse. The fourth side is the "main wall," which is thirty feet high.

One end of the court is designated the service end, because players always serve from the same half of the court. To be in play, a serve must first bounce on the side penthouse beyond the midcourt line, then land on the floor in an area twenty feet wide and twenty-one feet deep. At the rear of the service end is a netted opening called the *dedans*, which is about three and a half feet above the floor. It runs nearly twenty-two feet across and is a little more than three feet high. It gives spectators—who watch from two long benches right in back of the opening or from a glassed-off lounge behind—a sightline to the court, and provides the receiver with a place to hit a high-velocity "force" that automatically wins a point. Running along one side of the court—the service wall—is a series of openings called galleries, which also provide a vantage point for spectators and, in the case of the last gallery on the receiving end, another winning opening for the players. At the Racquet Club and many other courts, a cowbell hangs from the netting in the winning gallery, and rings triumphantly when a player hits a ball there. Watching from the *dedans* or the galleries, with the penthouse roof overhead and the netting in front, is as cozy as following a badminton game from a screened-in porch.



Opposite the service end is the receiving end, which is known as the hazard side. In addition to the winning gallery, it has two distinctive features. One is the tambour: thirty-two feet from the net, the main wall makes a forty-five-degree turn and jogs eighteen inches into the court, and continues to the back wall. Because the ball caroms off the tambour at unpredictable angles, players try to stay on the service end so they can strike the ball *toward* the tambour, either hitting it or, even better, barely missing, and catching their opponent out of position. The other feature is the grille, situated in the back wall where it meets the main wall. It is a little over three feet in width and height, and is placed about four feet above the floor, and balls hit into it are outright winners.

The walls are black, the floor is rust-red, and the poles dividing the galleries are a freshly painted dark green. The finishing coat covering every hard surface was made from a secret formula devised by Bickley & Company, of London. In the nineteenth century, the Bickley compound was considered a technological marvel, because it prevented courts from "sweating"—acquiring a coat of moisture—on humid days. The surface of the walls looks unusual, and no wonder. As *Punch* reported in 1952, Bickley's men took "half a hogshead of ox's blood, 14 bushels of lampblack, and a bucket of wine to give sheen to the composition." Painted cross-court at one-yard intervals on the floor at the service end are white stripes that correspond to numbers from 1 to 6 on the sidewalls. You are accustomed to service lines and baselines and sidelines, but what in creation are these? "Those are for chases," your host says. "Too complicated to explain. Let's have a knockup." When you see him head for the service side, you deduce that he wants to hit the ball back and forth to warm up.

He hits the ball out of his hand at a nice slow pace. You draw back your racquet just in time to see the ball whizz by. You have played on grass and all kinds of artificial surfaces, but nothing has prepared you for the speed of this floor. Showing mercy, your host lofts the next ball. It still skids low off the floor, but you are lucky enough to get your racquet on it. "Lucky" may not be the right word, though. The ball is nowhere near the middle of the racquet when you hit it, and the contact sends a shudder up your arm. As you wonder whether you are suffering a recurrence of tennis elbow or a broken arm, the ball wobbles pathetically toward the bottom of the net. Henry Bunis, the third-ranking amateur in the United States and a former touring pro in lawn tennis, told me, "My first time on the court, I thought it was totally impossible. You feel completely uncoördinated. Even the best guys in the world can look uncoördinated, because you never know what the spin is going to do to the ball. In lawn tennis, you can manipulate the direction of the ball. But that's much less true in court tennis. The ball knows where it wants to go. The heaviness of the ball and the small sweet spot in your racquet make you much more conservative in your shot selection. The ball travels faster in court tennis, and it curves. Because it's solid, it seems to gain momentum as it travels. If you cut a lawn-tennis ball on a court-tennis court, it would lose its spin after hitting one wall. But the heavier ball keeps its spin even after hitting several walls. For a lawn-tennis player, reading the walls is probably the most difficult thing in court tennis." The horrible part is that it never seems to get any easier. Bunis, disappointed with his play in the semifinals of the Gold Racquet, at the Tuxedo Club, in Tuxedo Park, New York, in February, and in the semifinal of the United States Amateur doubles, in Philadelphia, in March, withdrew from the rest of this year's tournaments to get a respite from the maddening game.

THE game that has so frustrated Bunis was probably invented by monks in France sometime before 1050 A.D. Its name was *jeu de paume* (game of the palm), which was an accurate description until the racquet came into general use, early in the sixteenth century. At first, tennis was played both indoors and out; as more walled-in courts were built, its popularity soared. Before long, the churchmen understood that they had created a temptation too great even for men of the cloth. In the year 1200 or thereabouts, a bishop was reprimanded for playing tennis instead of conducting Evensong. The Lord's work was so neglected that in 1245 the Archbishop of Rouen prohibited French priests from playing the game at all. By this time, *jeu de paume* had become thoroughly secularized. It was recorded in 1292 that thirteen professionals were making balls in Paris, and that a good many of the balls were exported to England.

To my mind, the best modern book about the game is "The Willis Faber Book of Tennis & Rackets," by Lord Aberdare. In the tennis community, the author is known primarily for having won the British Amateur four times (matching his father's record) and for being president of Britain's Tennis & Rackets Association; the uninitiated know him as chairman of committees in the House of Lords. He is an urbane man of seventy-two, who looks as much at home sitting on the woolsack as he does stroking the ball at London's Queen's Club in old-fashioned flannel shorts. To him goes the credit for compiling the most comprehensive history of the game—no small feat, since old literary citations and relics of ancient courts keep turning up.

As Lord Aberdare notes, one reason court tennis became known as the game of kings was that Charles V of France and Edward III of England both issued decrees in 1365 restricting the playing of tennis to noblemen and members of the court. It seems that ordinary citizens had become so infatuated with the game that they were neglecting archery practice—and the ability of soldiers to shoot arrows with deadly effect was the key to survival for monarchs. But these and subsequent decrees were about as effective as the Volstead Act. Over the next three centuries, the game stubbornly prospered in England and France, and spread across southern and central Europe. In the late sixteenth century, there were several hundred courts in Paris, employing seven thousand people. The game was widely played in Spain and Italy. Venice had four courts, and in Rome the painter Caravaggio got into a dispute with a friend over a match and ended up killing him. Forty-six towns in the German states had at least one court, and Prague had four. King Erik IV built a court in Stockholm, and records uncovered in Holland

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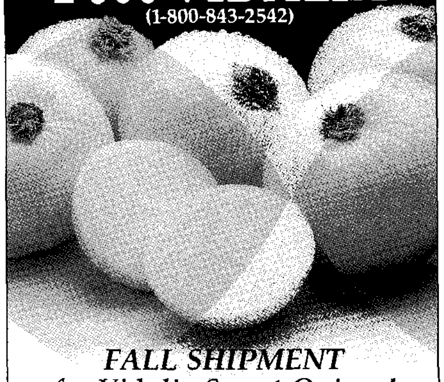
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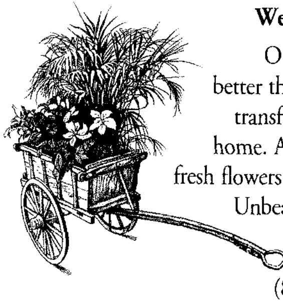
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indicate that New Amsterdam had a court in Peter Stuyvesant's day.

The so-called golden age of tennis extended through the seventeenth century. Henry VIII, the game's greatest royal patron, played often and lost often, judging by his wagering records. His rival across the Channel, François I, envied Henry's navy, especially the Great Harry, a man-of-war a hundred and eighty feet long. In 1532, the Frenchman built La Grande Françoise, which was a third longer than the Great Harry. Knowing Henry's passion for tennis, François had a tennis court installed between the two castles of the ship. When La Grande Françoise was launched at Le Havre, in September of 1533, she ran aground halfway across the harbor. She was towed back to her moorings, only to capsize in a storm two months later.

References to tennis can be found in seven of Shakespeare's plays. The most famous quotation appears in "Henry V," recounting how in 1414, before the battle of Agincourt, the Dauphin sent the English King a present of tennis balls, an act of symbolic resonance equal, say, to Khrushchev's sending Kennedy a duffelbag full of footballs on the eve of the Cuban missile crisis. Shakespeare's Henry is more than a little put out:

When we have match'd our rackets to these balls,
We will, in France, by God's grace, play a set,
Shall strike his father's crown into the hazard.
Tell him he hath made a match with such a wrangler,
That all the courts of France will be disturb'd
With chaces.

But in the eighteenth century the game began to lose its foothold—in 1783, the number of *jeu de paume* courts in Paris had shrunk to a mere thirteen. The French Revolution delivered the coup de grace to the game of kings. Ironically, a tennis court was the venue for one of the Revolution's pivotal moments. It was on the court at Versailles that the National Assembly took its famous oath in 1789. "Unfortunately," Lord Aberdare wrote after a visit to Versailles, "there seems little likelihood of the court being restored for play. It is now a national monument and some ill-informed restorer has inserted a 'Dedans' at the Hazard end."

In England, court tennis took on a somewhat shady character. In 1772, a man named Joseph Fenn wrote a booklet that told punters the odds of winning at various stages in a match. A larger work, "Annals of Gaming," published in 1775, offered this grim assessment: "So various are the deceptions of this game, that it is almost impossible for a stranger to go into a tennis-court, and bett without losing his money—so prostituted is this noble game to what it used to be, that instead of seeing only persons of the first rank in England, as formerly, we see the Dedans now thronged with some of the most notorious sharpers in London." Perhaps more ominous, a game called "field tennis," the precursor of lawn tennis, was beginning to catch the fancy of the upper classes.

Jeu de paume never recovered in France, though Napoleon kept courts at Compiègne and Fontainebleau in top condition, and even played occasionally. In England, in the eighteen-forties, the game enjoyed an unexpected revival among titled Victorians; it was all the rage to build private courts at country estates. The game got a royal boost when the Prince Consort decided to try his hand; Albert played once at Hampton Court, and his dressing drawer there—third from the right in the second row—is marked by a brass plaque. The Prince of Wales, later Edward VII, also dabbled in the game. Along with private courts, clubs with court-tennis courts sprang up in both Britain and America. By 1893, there were courts in Boston, Newport, New York, and Chicago. By the time of the First World War, there were about forty courts in use in Britain. But then taxes and minimum-wage laws steadily killed off the great estates, and their tennis courts with them.

The calibre of play had improved substantially in the nineteenth century and was further enhanced by the introduction of the railroad serve in the 1898 world championship. This is an awkward-looking shot in which the player holds his warped racquet backward, tosses the ball in the air as in lawn tennis, and swings across his body when striking the ball; the ball spins clockwise and races down the penthouse roof. Professionals dominated the game then, as they do today. (Their preëminence was interrupted in 1914, when Jay Gould held the world championship, and again from 1959 to 1981, when three Americans and a Briton kept the title in amateur hands.) They played with great flair, often devising outlandish handicaps to stimulate wagering interest. Edmond Barre, a Frenchman, who held the world title for thirty-three years, from 1829 to 1862, once won a match at Fontainebleau after walking forty-three miles from Paris in ten hours. Charles Delahaye was a splendid French player who had the misfortune to be Barre's contemporary. He once played a match wearing the dress uniform of a National Guardsman and holding a musket with bayonet in his left hand. Most flamboyant of all was a French pro named Louis, who won one match while carrying a man on his back and another while carrying a donkey. As might be expected, he was described as "a stout, thick-set man of great strength and activity."

The game as it is played today differs little from the game that was described by Antonio Scaino in his "Treatise on Tennis," in 1555. Both court tennis and lawn tennis use the same nomenclature in tallying points—"deuce," "advantage," and so on—but in court tennis they are earned in far more inventive ways. They can be awarded outright if the ball is hit into the *dedans* or the other winning openings. They can be won through opponents' racquet errors, which plague even the best players when a ball can be smashed off walls and still travel at more than a hundred miles an hour. Or they can be won on chases, which begin with shots that the receiving player doesn't return, either because he can't reach them or because he chooses to let them go because they are too difficult to play. Such a ball is marked where it lands on its second bounce; the lines on the court serve as locators. The point is held in abeyance until two chases are laid down (or until a player comes within a point of winning the game and one chase is pending). The players then change sides and the chases are played off. Say a player has put down chases of 3 and 4 (meaning three yards and four yards from the end wall). When he switches sides and moves to the service end, his aim is to prevent his opponent from hitting the ball closer to the wall on the next two points. If the ball's second bounce is at Chase 5 when playing off Chase 3, the player who had Chase 3 wins the point and goes up 15-love. On the next point, his opponent puts the ball down

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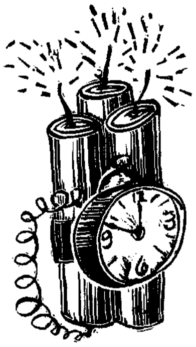
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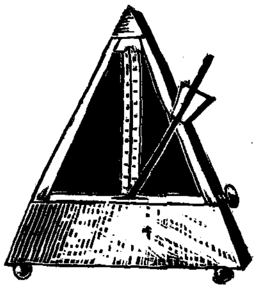
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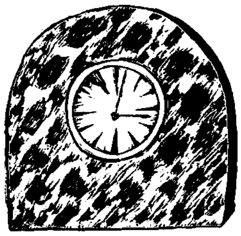
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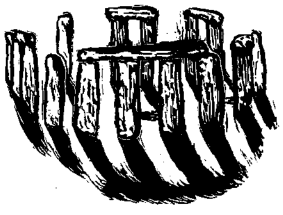
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at Chase 2, comfortably beating Chase 4 and tying the score at 15–all. In effect, playing the chases is like pitching coins at a wall. The contestant who comes closer walks off with the loot. If the coins land the same distance from the wall, it is a tie, and neither player benefits; in court tennis, this is called a chase-off, and the score remains the same.

The racquets used today are almost identical to those which have been used for well over four centuries, the one major change being that in recent decades gut strings gave way gradually to synthetic strings; that change made it possible to string racquets more tautly. Synthetic string generates greater pace, while gut allowed for more cut, since it had more give and the ball stayed on the racquet face longer. The various governing bodies in court tennis have refused to countenance changes in the dimensions of the racquet, and that may be wise, for the traditional design perfectly suits the classic stroke of the game—a downward cutting motion in which the face of the racquet comes around the outside of the ball, imparting a clockwise spin. A ball struck in this manner will hit the wall and then land on the floor with a low bounce, making a return difficult. If the ball were hit with the low-to-high stroke used in lawn tennis, the topspin would make it bounce to eye level, setting up an easy kill.

It is often said that lawn tennis is to court tennis what checkers is to chess—chess as it might be played inside a pinball machine. Imagine that you are playing lawn tennis and your serve is returned to your forehand side—deep, but not deep enough to prevent an offensive reply. Your options are fairly straightforward. You see out of the corner of your eye where your opponent is, and then you put a topspin shot where he isn't. Now try to imagine an equivalent situation in court tennis. Instead of hitting the ball straight back at you, your adversary hits the ball off the main wall (this shot is called a boast) to keep you off balance. The ball hits the floor at Chase 5 on your forehand side, the rough equivalent of where the lawn-tennis ball landed. Is the ball moving slowly enough for you to punch it into the winning gallery without floating it onto the penthouse? Has it bounced up enough for you to pop it over the high part of the net toward the grille? Is it manageable enough to be cut over the low part of the net so that it hits the wall under the winning gallery and then goes skittering diagonally and probably unplayably across the floor? Or can you perhaps use the same spin to drill it low into the forehand corner, where it will skip off the floor to the sidewall, ricochet to the back wall, and then spin violently back to the floor—a surefire winner unless your opponent happens to be standing right there? Are you in position to bang the ball off the tambour so that it bounces out at a ninety-degree angle? Or, if your opponent fancies himself a master of the boast, can you give him a dose of his own medicine by blasting the ball off the main wall so that it rebounds deep into his forehand corner? Of course, if his shot has not challenged you, you can show off a bit. Hit the *inside* of the ball and curl it toward the grille, leaving your opponent to divine whether it is going to hit the tambour en route, cut down onto the floor after hitting the back wall, or perhaps plop into the grille. Or, if you want to break his spirit, strike the inside of the ball with a lot of cut against the main wall so that it hits the floor spinning like a dervish and curves *around* the tambour, finally dribbling under the grille. Sound complicated? Don't worry. For the first six months after you take up the game, you'll be too busy keeping score to even think about these options.

THE court-tennis title is the longest continuously played championship in sports, for the earliest recorded world-title match was in 1740. A Frenchman, known only as Clergé, took top honors—no surprise, since France was still the center of the game. The present format for determining the champion was first used in 1885, when Tom Pettitt, who had come to the United States from Britain as a boy, went back and defeated George Lambert at Hampton Court: the first player to win seven sets is the champion; four sets are scheduled for Monday and Wednesday, and five for Friday, and they are played as needed.

The most recent title match in this two-hundred-and-fifty-one-year-old series was played last March at the Racquet & Tennis Club, in New York. The match—between the defending champion, Wayne Davies, who is the pro at the club, and Lachlan Deuchar,

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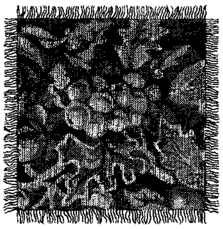

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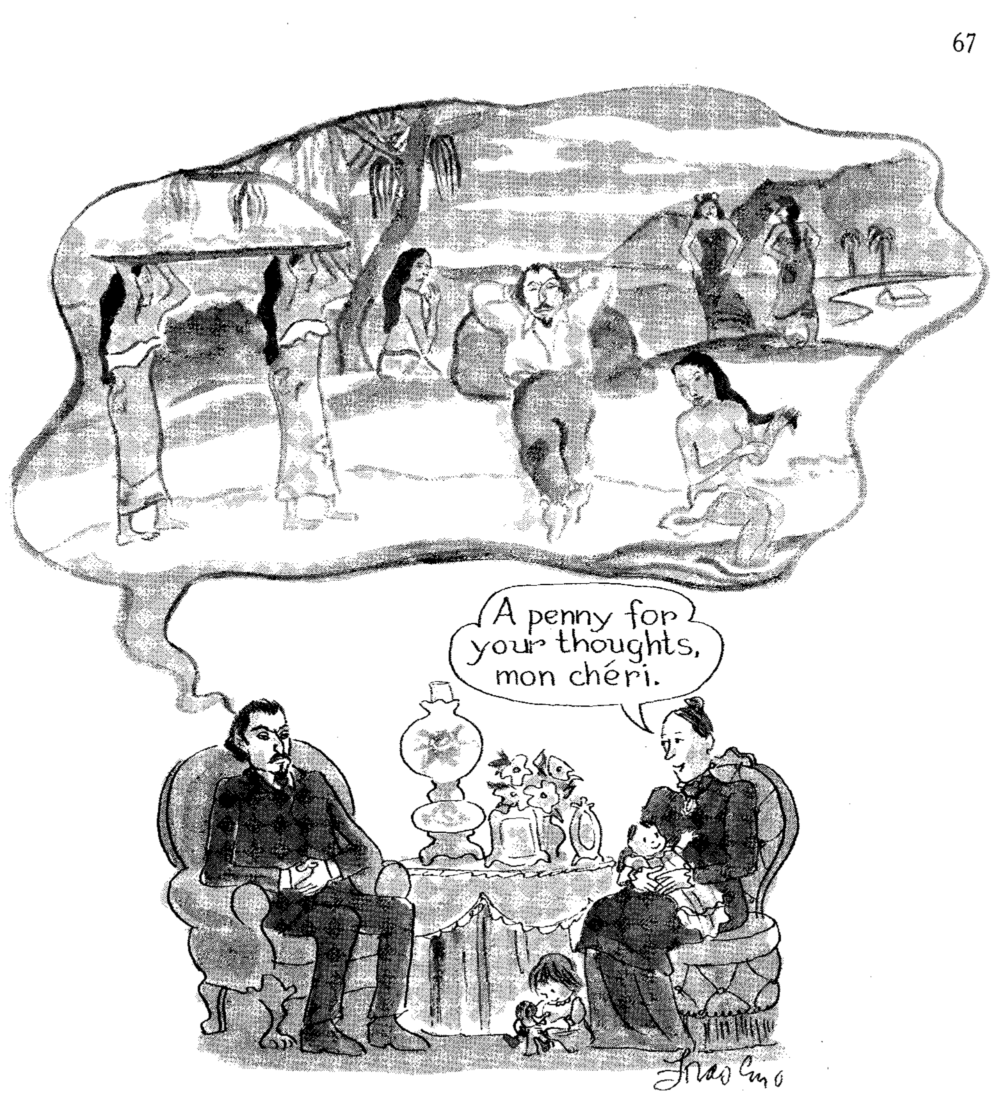
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a touring professional based in London—created intense interest in the court-tennis community, with spectators coming from as far away as Australia, and good-sized contingents from Boston, Newport, and Philadelphia. Club neckties imprinted with tennis racquets in various configurations revealed place of residence as quickly as license plates. Compared with the number of lawn-tennis players, the number of court-tennis players is minuscule—upward of two thousand in Britain, five hundred or so in both the United States and Australia, a hundred in France. But devotees are quick to point out that the total represents a fifty-per-cent gain over fifteen years ago, thanks in part to the game's rising popularity among women. An obstacle to growth is the paucity of courts, which cost more than a million dollars to build. Despite the expense, several new facilities are in the planning stages, most notably one in Washington, D.C.

Among those sitting in the New York *dedans* were three former world champions, two runners-up, and Prince Edward, a keen player, who made the crossing expressly for the match. Not only did the spectators anticipate excellent tennis; they were also attracted by the players' contrasting styles of play, the differences in their personalities, and a longtime friendship that had lately been frayed by fierce rivalry. Silly as it sounds, the tension of a world championship in this tiny sport far exceeds anything in lawn tennis, where the players simply move on to another tournament the following week. In court tennis, a player has to win a Grand Slam event (the British, United States, Australian, or French Open) and challenge the world champion within two years of the champion's last defense; if there is more than one challenger, they play one another in eliminator matches. The equivalent in lawn tennis would be winning Wimbledon, submitting a challenge, training for more than a year, playing an eliminator against the winner of the United States Open, and then taking on the reigning champion. Losing usually means having to win another Grand Slam event. If the player does so, he then goes into training, listens to the clock tick on his athletic ability, and sets about repairing the mental scars left by his last defeat. As in big-time sports, some court-tennis players go to sports psychologists—in their case, seeking to build the mental resiliency that in this brainy game can mean the difference between victory and defeat. A player who submits his first challenge when he is thirty-two or thirty-three years old will be at his court-tennis peak when he takes on the champion. (Because players usually start playing later than lawn-tennis players do, and because it takes years and tens of thousands of balls to learn how to read the spin off the walls, young stars are a rarity.) By the time he mounts his third challenge, he may be thirty-seven, half a step slower, and starting to show signs of competitive fatigue. It seems more than coincidence that the last two champions surrendered the title at age thirty-seven.

The stakes, then, are similar to those faced by a boxer. A world-championship bout is not just another fight. The lucky fighters get a crack at it; the luckier ones get a rematch; the luckiest ones win, and then decide when *they* feel like putting their title on the line. The weeks before a title fight and the weeks before a court-tennis championship have a similar aura. In tennis, the challenger generally arrives on the scene a month ahead of time to get used to the defender's court. The players practice at different times and out of each other's sight; they have strategists and sparring partners. Yet they are in close proximity, so conversation is unavoidable, and each is always looking for a psychological edge, a way of talking or carrying himself that conveys confidence. That is the white-flannel equivalent of the pre-fight weigh-in, where the combatants stare

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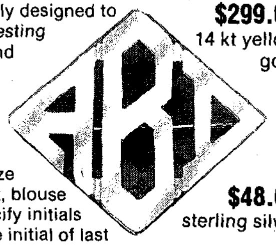

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at their opponents, talk tough, and keep their muscles flexed. In court tennis, a player worries about his opponent's landing a knockout punch of a different sort—a confounding new shot that could sway the outcome. In a game with more than fifty known serves, some of which were unreturnable when they were first used, fear of the unknown haunts a world-class player no matter how strong he or she is physically or psychologically.

Because of the game's complexity, which forces a succession of split-second decisions, the ability to concentrate for long stretches of time is more important in court tennis than in almost any other sport. After a big match, a top player is apt to be more tired mentally than physically, even if he has been running at full tilt for five sets. "My brain turned to spaghetti out there" is a common lament of world-class players. In a world championship, the number of mental mistakes tends to increase as the match goes on. Even the marker, who calls faults, and the referee, who keeps score from the *dedans*, show signs of mental fatigue; more of their calls are questionable, and sometimes they even lose track of the score. There are no commercial breaks, injury time-outs, or other pauses in the action during a set. In lawn tennis, a player can go on autopilot when he is receiving serve, because he knows the chances are good that he will win the next game on his serve; in other words, the structure of the game provides a firebreak that prevents the match from getting out of control. In court tennis, however, the players do not change ends at prescribed intervals. The server keeps serving until there are two chases or until it is game point with one chase still to be played; only then do the players change ends. Think of Pete Sampras monopolizing the serve until his opponent wrests it away by hitting two passing shots. True, the serve in lawn tennis is far more overpowering, yet in court tennis the configuration of the court confers a very real tactical advantage on the server. In most matches, the server has a sixty-forty chance of winning any given point. He can hit off the tambour, or score points outright by finding the grille or the winning gallery, or by punching unreturnable shots beyond the service line, which stretches across the court twenty-one feet from the back wall. On the service end, by contrast, balls hit out of reach into the comparable area would be chases, leaving the point temporarily unresolved. Small wonder that the receiving end is called the hazard side.

The big danger in court tennis is getting pinned down amid the hazards. All it takes is a string of good serves and a couple of errors, and in a flash the score has gone from 2–all to 5–2. "The momentum in court tennis seems to change quicker than in other games," G. H. (Pete) Bostwick, a former world champion, said. "Everyone agrees that it's easy to lose momentum, but no one seems to know how to get it back. When a guy gets on top of you, it's hard to reverse the tide."

BEFORE *the recent world championship*, questions of psychology were discussed as intently as the players' shotmaking ability. At first glance, the competitors seemed very similar: both were native Australians, both came from modest backgrounds, both took obvious pride in reaching the top of what had been a rich man's game. Wayne Davies, the champion, who is thirty-five, was given an edge, because the contest was on his home court; at the same time, he had been recuperating from injuries, and his match readiness was in question because he had not played in a major singles competition since April of 1990. Lachlan Deuchar, the challenger, who is thirty-two, was given an edge in confidence: he had won the past four Grand Slam events, hadn't lost a singles match for two years, and was No. 1 in the computer rankings. But his fellow-pros wondered if he had reservations about playing in New York that would offset all those results.

As is true in every sport, there were factors that did not show up in tournament records or computer rankings. "With these guys, a winning attitude comes most often from a certain kind of personality," George Bell, the runner-up in the 1990 United States Amateur, said before the title showdown. "There was a reason that McEnroe and Borg were able to stay on top all those years, why they could beat players of comparable physical ability. The way I see it, Wayne's personality—his doggedness, his intensity, his single-mindedness—is much better suited to winning than Lachie's. Wayne's tending a fire inside, feeding it oxygen and coal, giving it everything it needs.

Lachie is a little more laid-back. You get the feeling that when he wakes up in the morning he's thinking, Well, life goes on."

Davies, the son of schoolteachers, grew up in Geelong, some fifty miles from Melbourne, and started playing lawn tennis when he was four. By the time he was eighteen, he was burned out on the game. His first love then was Australian-rules football, even though he weighed only a hundred and forty pounds and stood five feet ten. He attended Deakin University, in his home town, and studied organic chemistry. "I took up squash at nineteen very seriously," he said recently. "The reason was that the chemistry professors ran the squash club at Deakin. My grade-point average went up miles." A friend suggested that he play for the squash team at the Royal Melbourne Tennis Club, and it was there that he was first exposed to court tennis. "I remember seeing these stupid-looking courts," he said. "I thought it was a game for old men."

Playing squash competitively several times a week, Davies says, he moved into the top twenty in the state of Victoria. After going three hundred and sixty-four days without losing—this was in 1978—he was defeated in a team match and was moping around the Melbourne club. Lesley Ronaldson, who was, and is, one of the best women court-tennis players in the world, and the wife of Chris Ronaldson, then the head court-tennis pro at Melbourne and later the world champion for six years, suggested a game of court tennis as a way to cheer Davies up. "She thrashed me, 6–0," he said. "That was on my twenty-third birthday. I told Chris, 'I want enough lessons to beat her.' "

Lesley Ronaldson recently recalled, "He was obviously talented. He won a lot of points. But, no matter how talented you are, you can't beat someone with experience." She was quick to add, "I don't think I ever let him play me again."

Davies instantly fell in love with the game. "It was just perfect for my strengths and weaknesses," he said last spring. "I never hit the ball that hard in tennis or squash, but I could really crack it in court tennis." After only two months, he was playing off a twenty handicap, and had just barely become an "A" player. Handicaps are based on results against other players. Accord-

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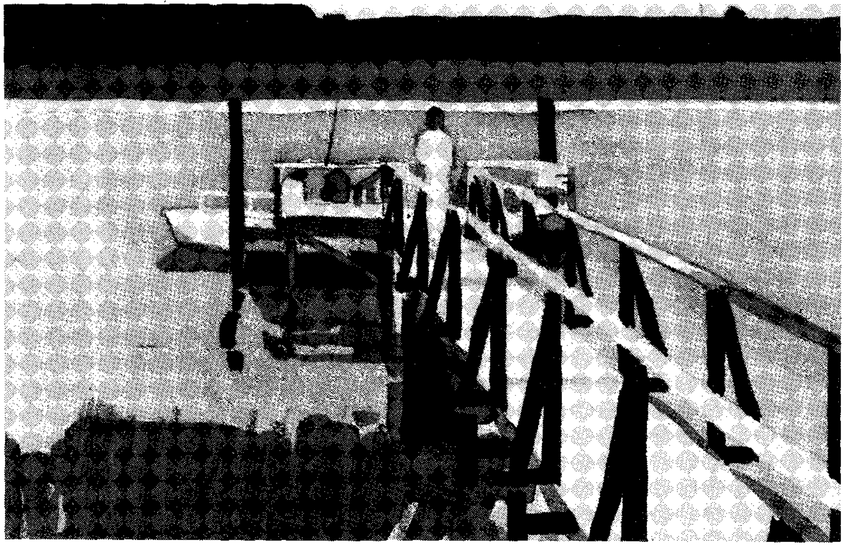

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ing to rankings posted at midseason in 1991, a zero handicap would put a player in the top fifteen in the world. Davies and Deuchar both play off *plus* eight, and five other professionals and three amateurs also have plus handicaps. Everyone else is at zero or has a minus handicap. Court-tennis players tend to think of their handicaps the way golfers think of theirs—as the numerical difference between their ability and an ideal standard of play.

Davies was teaching high-school physics and chemistry when a friend suggested that he sign on with the Melbourne club as an assistant court-tennis pro. "On September 13th, exactly two years after picking up a racquet—I remember when I did that because it was my birthday—I beat Colin Lumley in the Tasmanian Open," Davies said. Two months earlier, Lumley, a leading Australian professional, had beaten Graham Hyland, the country's top player, in the Australian Open. "My rise up the ranks—no one's ever come close to what I've done," Davies said.

Edward W. Cockram, the chairman of the Australian Royal Tennis Association, bears him out. "In twelve to eighteen months, he was playing off scratch," he recalled. "It was an unbelievable achievement. I don't think anyone in Australia had ever done that before." In January of 1981, Davies beat Jimmy Burke, a Philadelphia professional who had challenged for the world title two years before and had twice taken Chris Ronaldson, who in 1981 was the world champion, to five sets. From 1981 to 1987, Davies was the second-best player in the world, but he still couldn't reach the top: Ronaldson won sixteen of their seventeen encounters.

In 1980, Davies left Australia to become the pro at the court-tennis club in Bordeaux, and in June of 1982 he moved on to the Racquet Club in New York. "Wayne's a real student of the game, and going to New York was the best thing that ever happened to him," Ted Cockram said before last March's title match. "You've got all those former world champions over there, all those great players. It's a vast store of hands-on knowledge. Just getting on the court with the Bostwicks, Norty Knox, Dinny Phipps, Alastair Martin—he said they were the best lessons he ever had." Martin—who was taught by the legendary Punch Fairs, a British pro who in 1905 won the first of four world-title matches—captured the United States Amateur eight times, and is one of only four Americans to win the British Amateur. (The three others are Jay Gould; Dinny's father, Ogden M. Phipps; and Northrup Knox.) Martin was once ranked among the top fifty American amateurs in lawn tennis, sometimes training with Don Budge. Now a courtly, diffident man of seventy-six, Martin recalls sensing at once that Davies was different from most other young pros. "He's a good listener," Martin said. "We'd chat about different strokes and tactics, and he was smart enough to see how he could work some of them into his game."

While refining his technique during the eighties, Davies pursued a rigorous training program to build up his strength and stamina and repair his knees, which began giving him trouble in the late autumn of 1985. He had arthroscopic surgery on the tendon surrounding his right kneecap in the fall of 1989, and had the same procedure done on both legs in June of 1990. On a typical day after his most recent bout of surgery, his rehabilitation program would begin with running a hundred and twenty laps through the water at the shallow end of the club pool, an hour of weight lifting to strengthen his upper body, and forty-five minutes on Nautilus machines to strengthen his knees and legs. Later in the day, he would spend two or three hours on the court. What little fat he had turned to muscle, his leg strength doubled, and his resculpted arm and chest muscles greatly increased the velocity of his shots. "You can see Wayne's ready to play," his trainer, Andy Solomon, said, on the eve of the title match. "He calls it his Lendl look—gaunt and strong, cheeks all sucked in."

Davies has an angular physique, close-cropped dark-blond hair, and minimalist eyeglasses, and there is a touch of menace about him. On occasion, he has worn shirts with extra-short sleeves to give his opponent an intimidating look at his biceps. He also works himself into a psychological lather, seeking to build an aura of invincibility both in his own mind and in his opponent's. "I happen to think

"I dominate Lachie on the court," he said before the championship. "For a guy with such a strong personality, I make him meek on the court. I think he wants me to whip him."

This is a carefully constructed image that is somewhat at odds with reality. On the court, Davies' fighting-cock façade can fall away like a mask when his opponent gains the upper hand. Eugene L. Scott, the publisher and editor-in-chief of *Tennis Week*, qualifies as an expert on both lawn tennis and court tennis: he was in the top ten in the United States in lawn tennis for a decade, reaching No. 4 in 1963, and making it to the semifinals at Forest Hills in 1967, where he lost to John Newcombe; and in court tennis he won the United States Amateur ten times and twice challenged for the world championship. "On a bad day, Wayne looks like a sparrow who has been shocked out of its wits," Scott says. "You want to take him home and smooth his feathers. He has the aspect of being frightened."

Needless to say, Davies' truculent talk doesn't go over well in the gentlemanly precincts of court tennis. "He's a perfectly adjusted Australian—a chip on both shoulders," one British amateur said of him. The fact is, though, that after nearly a decade in the United States Davies is more Yank than Australian; in 1988, following a divorce from his first wife, an Australian, he married an American—the former Beth Phillips, who is an artist. "I know a lot of people find me off-putting at first," Davies says. "It's because I tell the truth. People will come up to me and ask me how I'll do in a match. I'll say I'll win two, two, and two, because the other guy isn't very good. People don't like that. It's O.K. if you're losing but not if you're winning. I'm getting better about those things, but first impressions are hard to beat."

Davies has another problem as well: he is a professional in a sport that clings to the amateur ideal of effortless grace. Although court tennis has become far more accessible in the past two decades than it had been for some centuries, its leading lights in New York and London by and large come from the same social class: they went to the same American prep schools or English public schools, and belong to clubs that most people have never heard of. Fraternization between pros and amateurs traditionally ends at the *dedans*. At the Racquet Club in New York, for instance, the professionals are in social purgatory. Unlike the club's other employees—hallmen, bartenders, waiters, dressing-room attendants—they are allowed to call members by their first names. But the kind of status that is accorded leading golf and lawn-tennis professionals, and would make them valued members of almost any club where their sport is played, is unthinkable for a court-tennis pro.

Two years ago, a member of the Tuxedo Club invited Davies and his wife to the dinner dance after the Gold Racquet. There was an uproar when the club found out, and Davies was disinvited. Last year, Davies quietly sounded out the chairman of the membership committee about joining the club, which, in addition to its court-tennis court, has lawn-tennis courts, a golf course, a swimming pool, and a lake for boating. Davies may look uncomfortable in a jacket and tie, and his rough-hewn Aussie accent was not learned at St. Paul's, but otherwise he measured up as a solid candidate: he plays a good game of golf and lawn tennis; his wife is attractive and charming and is blessed with an independent income; and they live in a comfortable apartment on the Upper East Side. After a month or so, however, Davies was advised not to press the matter. Because so many members of Tuxedo also belong to the New York club, it was explained to him, they felt awkward about having an employee of one be a member of the other. They also thought it would put their own court-tennis professional in an uncomfortable position. "That's what they'd be saying," Davies told me. "But that's not what they'd be thinking. It's *below* Tuxedo to have a court-tennis professional as a member."

Davies was nevertheless quick to say that "we're treated much better here than in England." In Britain, the friction between professionals and amateurs was the subject of a story in the London *Times* last winter. Some British amateurs resent what they see as the growing power and status of pros in what had been an amateur preserve; they would prefer to see the pros stick to making balls and giving lessons, and some would even eliminate the prize money awarded the winners of open tournaments. The

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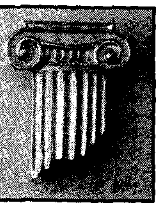

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British professionals, for their part, have reacted defiantly, to the point where they sometimes charge their usual rate for lessons when they practice with top amateurs. In 1989, the pros formed their own club and made up handsome sweaters with three tennis racquets and a crown darned below the V neck. If you are an amateur tennis player, don't bother trying to buy one. "It's the only club around where membership is based on merit," one professional said, delighting in reverse snobbery. Lachie Deuchar was blunter, saying, "The master-servant relationship is stronger in real tennis than in any other sport."

Despite the bitterness of those words, Deuchar is a happy-go-lucky type, who occupies the opposite end of the personality spectrum from Davies. Deuchar is a born charmer, with an impish grin. He's the kind of fellow who, with a wink and a flattering word, can persuade the waitresses at Queen's Club to open the restaurant an hour early. Where Davies always looks intense on the court, Deuchar usually seems to be having a merry time—at least, in run-of-the-mill tournaments. He chats up the galleries, jokes with the marker, and makes gagging sounds when he hits a bad shot. An unfortunate consequence is that he tends to lose his focus. As Australian players say, "Lachie goes walkabout"—the phrase for the aborigines' habit of gathering up their things and walking off with no destination in mind. At the United States Open last winter, in Boston, Deuchar was matched in the semifinals against Mike Gooding, the English-born assistant pro in New York. Gooding is a fine player, but the smart money had him going down in straight sets. True to form, Deuchar won the first two, and then he went walkabout: he wore the blank expression of a man who has tramped all day in the bush. But after letting Gooding tie the match Deuchar snapped to, and breezed through the fifth and final set, 6–1.

Deuchar, the son of an equipment salesman and a schoolteacher, started playing in Melbourne when he was sixteen. "I was out of school, just kicking about, and they advertised this job in the paper for an assistant," he said. "My dad said I ought to take it. It was just after the summer, and I had been down at the beach a lot, so I was vulnerable." Chris Ronaldson gave him the job. In 1978, Ronaldson was succeeded as the Melbourne pro by Colin Lumley, and a second young assistant signed up. His name was Wayne Davies, and he and Deuchar hit it off at once. While both were still mediocre singles players, they played well together in doubles. (As mature players, they have proved unbeatable as a pair, winning every match they've played since 1984.)

After four years, Deuchar moved to Hobart, Tasmania, as the head pro of the club there. "It was then that I got positively enthusiastic," he said. "Up until then, I was just dicking around. The trouble was, there wasn't anybody in Hobart to practice with. The thought of being Chris's assistant again—he was world champion by this time—seemed like the way to go." Deuchar joined Ronaldson at Hampton Court in October, 1981. "I would get kicked when I played Chris," he recalled. "But I improved very quickly right then. In December of that year, I played in the British Open and beat Davey Johnson. That was my best result ever." After 1984, Deuchar lost to only five players: Ronaldson, Davies, Lumley, Hyland, and Jonathan Howell, of Britain. In the 1984 Scottish Open, Deuchar finally beat Ronaldson in competition, ending the champion's three-and-a-half-year winning streak.

Deuchar was never keen on performing the duties of a club pro—stringing racquets, making balls, giving lessons, playing "customer games" with "B" players—so he set out three years ago to see if he could make a living as a touring professional. He is still at it, but it has not been easy. Because court tennis remains largely invisible to the public, the purses are small: the winner of the world championship gets only fifteen thousand dollars and the loser six thousand, and winning the United States Open was worth just twelve hundred. (It should be noted that the stakes can be far steeper when wealthy amateurs compete with pros. In 1937, the New York *American* reported that forty thousand dollars was wagered when Ogden Phipps and James Van Alen were paired with professionals in a doubles match in Aiken, South Carolina, where former Secretary of the Navy William C. Whitney

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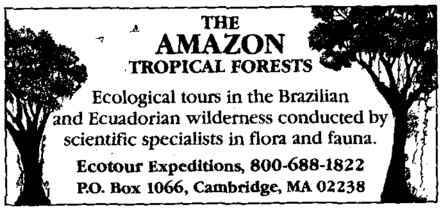

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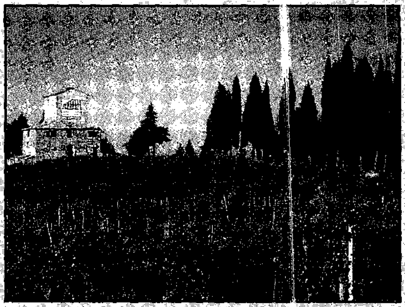
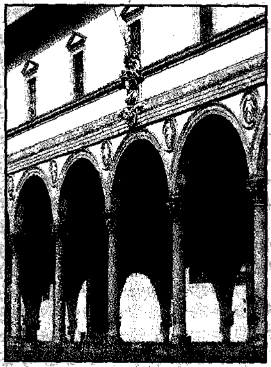
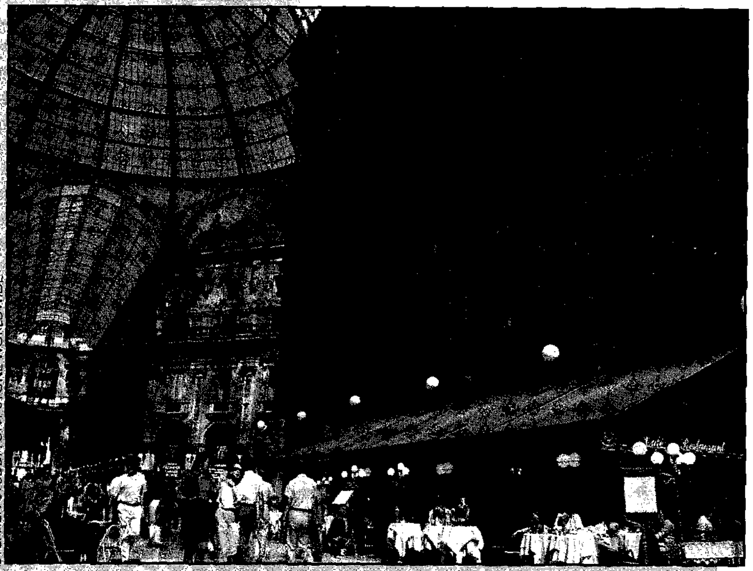


Italy is the ruins of ancient civilizations, the art of the Renaissance, and the modern designs of Milan. Its numerous provinces, each markedly different from the others, are combined into twenty autonomous regions, which in turn form the familiar boot-shaped republic.



Clockwise, from above: *fifteenth-century architecture in Florence; a Chianti vineyard in Tuscany; a café in Milan's Galleria shopping mall*

ALENA VIKOVA/TONY STONE WORLDWIDE



Milan has become one of the world's great shopping venues

STEPHEN STUDD/TONY STONE WORLDWIDE

Italians define themselves as Romans or Florentines or Venetians or Milanese

It has been said that despite the historical fact of Italy's unification over a century ago, the country remains delightfully disjunct. Indeed, a trip throughout the peninsula and its outlying islands today reveals a constantly surprising number of distinct regional variations on the Italian theme. From the sophisticated foods of Sicily to the beaches and grottoes of Sardinia, from the historical richness of Rome to the contemporary sophistication of Milan, Italy continues to be a land of diverse personalities. This individual character is reflected in many facets of the numerous jewels of the Italian regions, from subtle and dramatic changes in landscape to stylistic differences in art and architecture and tantalizing variety in food and wine. If anything truly does unify Italy, it is that virtually all residents of the country—native and adopted alike—relish showing off and sharing the bounty of its various regions.

A fabulous fountain on Rome's Piazza Navona

DWIGHT V. GAST

One such adopted resident is Sister Koet of the Ladies of Bethany. For some forty years, she has enriched the experience of visitors to Rome by conducting free English-language guided tours to all sorts of sights in the capital of Christendom through an ecumenical center called Foyer Unitas off Rome's Piazza Navona. "We don't just visit Christian places," says the sister. "We've devised programs that take people to many monuments and sites of historical interest in the city." In a city like Rome, that program encompasses quite a bit, since the palimpsest of Rome bears traces of civilizations from ancient to modern.

One revealing expression often heard in the capital is *si sta bene a tavola.* "It's hard to translate," admits restaurateur Gino Cruciani, the outgoing proprietor of Hostaria Romana, a neighborhood eatery off Piazza Barberini. "What it means basically is that people have a good time at the dinner table. In Rome, eating out is about more than just food." Signor Cruciani is emphatic about the social and sensual aspects of Roman restaurants. "They give us a chance to relax with family and friends. There's nothing Romans love more than to dine out en masse for hours in a noisy restaurant in the city or in some favorite spot out of town—that's why you'll never be rushed

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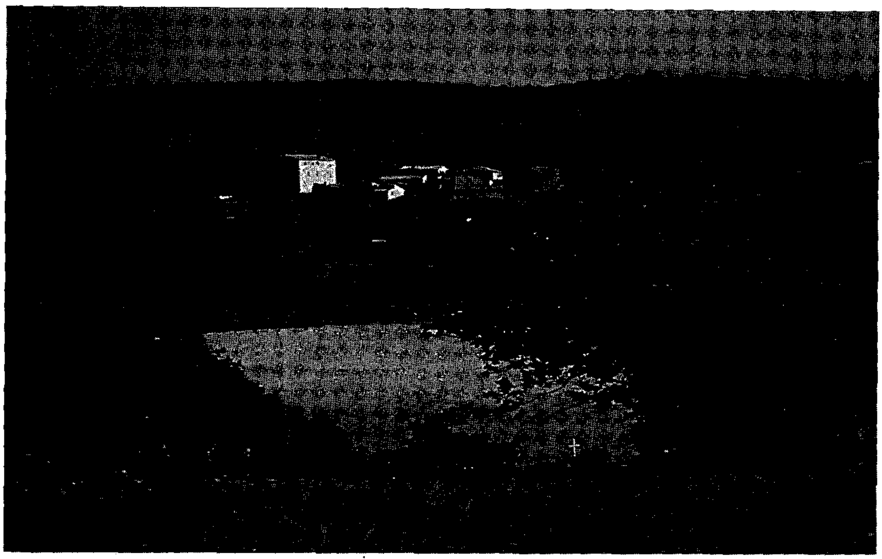

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here like in most other places around the world," he explains proudly.

But good eating is not restricted to Rome. The treasures of Tuscany are exemplified as much by the region's culinary specialties such as the grilled steak known as *bistecca alla fiorentina* and the complex blend of grapes that go into Chianti wine as it is by the Renaissance art and architecture found in the regional capital of Florence. "Of course, Florence is home to Italy's most famous art museum, the Uffizi," says Marchesa Bona Frescobaldi, who is one of the city's most culturally active personalities. "And there are so many other works of art in the Pitti Palace and churches throughout the city," she continues. "But there is much more to Tuscany than Florence. The spas of Montecatini, the walled city of Lucca, Pisa with its tourist icon of the Leaning Tower, mysterious Etruscan Volterra, medieval Siena, the Middle Ages skyline of San Gimignano, the Renaissance perfection of Pienza—those places as well as lesser-known towns like Montepulciano and Montalcino—all are aspects of what we consider the most Italian region in Italy."

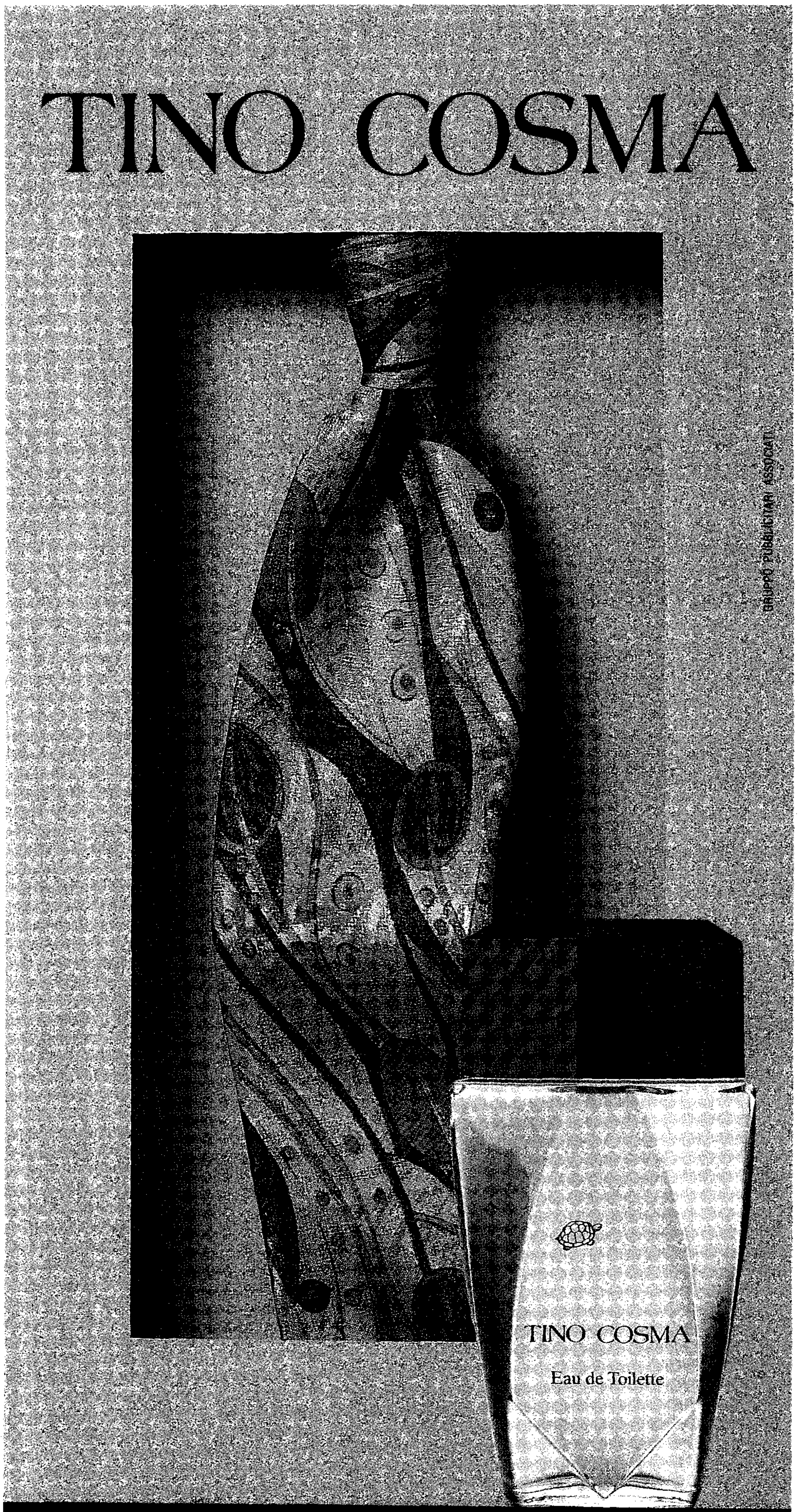
Florence's Ponte Vecchio

Less familiar but no less beguiling than the towns of Tuscany are those of neighboring Umbria. As vintner Marchese Piero Antinori explains, "There are a number of places in Umbria already familiar to the outside world. Orvieto is known for its cathedral and wine, Perugia has a famous university where foreigners study Italian, Assisi is the town of St. Francis and St. Clare, and Spoleto has its music festival. But because it is not as well travelled, Umbria has preserved some old ways that have died out elsewhere. One example is an ancient game called *ruzzola,* played something like golf. All the locals did it when I was growing up in Tuscany, but now you have to come to Umbria to see it. And there are a number of more tangible traditions in Umbria, such as the ceramics of Deruta and Gubbio. But you have to hunt them out, like truffles—which is only appropriate, since one of my favorite things about Umbria is its truffles. There are so many kinds here, from white to black and everything in between. It's one of the things that makes Umbria unique in Italy."

Venice at sunset, heaven on earth

Also unique in Italy—and the world, for that matter—is Venice. Its singular lack of vehicular traffic has allowed the city to appear almost the way it looked centuries ago when it was a major maritime power known as La Serenissima, or Most Serene. "It should be so serene now," says Arrigo Cipriani, outspoken owner of Harry's Bar, which under his father's ownership was a favorite watering hole of Ernest Hemingway. "There is so much to take care of here—the churches, the Titians, the Tintorettos, the canals—that it's really gotten beyond the control of the Venetians. Venice really belongs to the world. And we are grateful that it is so cosmopolitan. Even though we may complain about too many people coming to Venice, we really are happy that they keep coming. Because of their genuine affection for the city, many people and organizations have helped preserve Venice's artistic and architectural heritage by sponsoring the restoration of monuments and works of art."

One of those people who came to Venice—and stayed—is tapestry artist Liselotte Höhs, who left her native Vienna "an eternity ago" to live and work alongside one of the city's fabled canals. "Even if you're not an artist," she says, "Venice brings out the artistic temperament in you. The



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ethereal look of these buildings that seem to float on the water, the abundance of art in the museums and churches, the quality of the light, the real joy of living you find here. There's a constant dialogue with the city and with the outside world. Venice is such a *cosmopolitan* city that sooner or later everyone passes through."

Perhaps more cosmopolitan than any city in Italy is Milan, the country's financial capital and center of fashion and design. "Milan represents the spirit of contemporary Italy," says Maria Pezzi, who has been writing about the Milanese fashion scene for over fifty years. "Its role as an industrial center and the fact that the textile mills are all nearby made Milan a natural choice for the fashion industry," she recalls. "So there was already an industrial base that produced high-quality goods. But we Milanese also have a strong entrepreneurial sense. We have the largest trade fair in Italy, the Fiera di Milano, and the kind of pride in our product and marketing ability that made one street in an otherwise largely industrial-looking city, Via Monte Napoleone, into the most elegant shopping street in Italy. It is lined with the shops of the world's greatest designers, most of whom are Milanese by no coincidence."

Not all of Milan is about marketing, though. Another of its celebrated products—design—came about as a way of adding a less commercial dimension to society. Ettore Sottsass, Jr., who founded Memphis, the group that designs iconoclastic furniture and fabrics, says, "What characterizes Milanese design is its attempt to be more humanistic in its approach, to respect the individual." Like much about Italy, Sottsass's designs are provocative, even joyous. And his respect for—and celebration of—the individual is characteristic not just of Milanese design, but of the best of all Italy.

Dwight V. Gast, a longtime resident of Italy, has written about the country for numerous publications. He is the author of "Florence/Venice/Milan Access," published this fall by HarperCollins.

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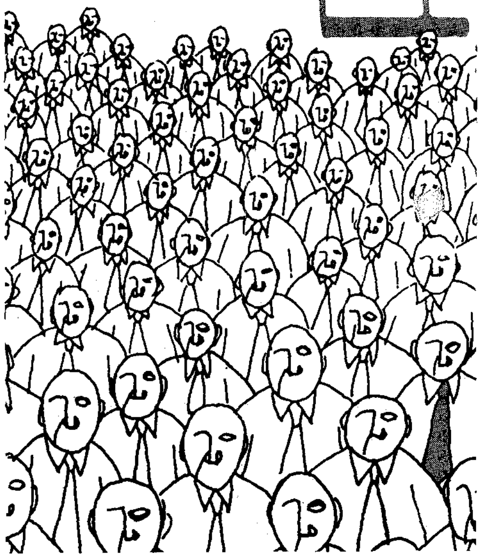

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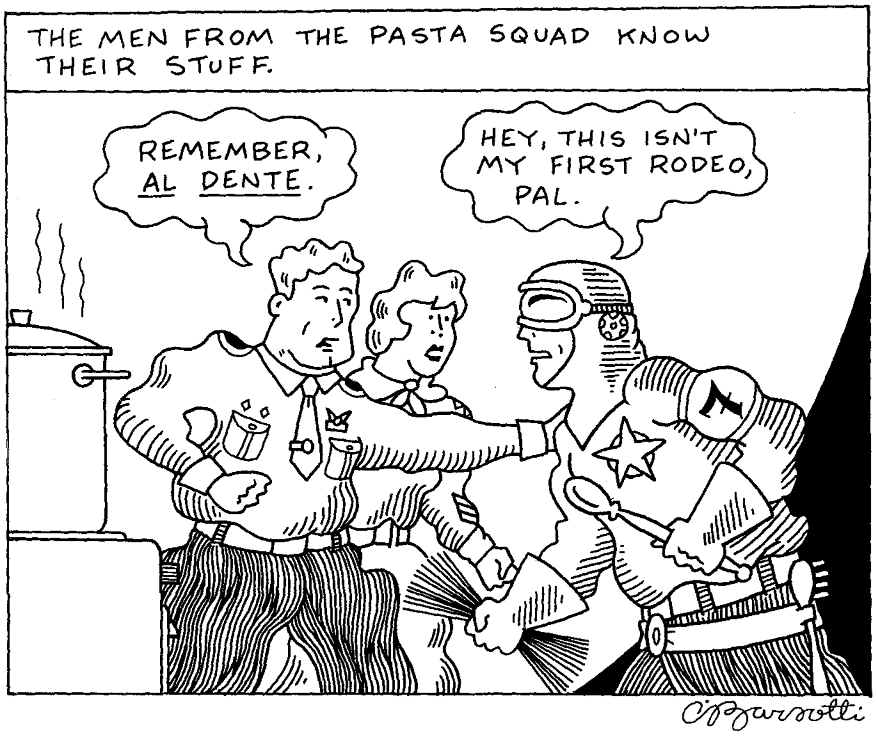
had built a court-tennis court in 1902.) A base salary and fees for lessons and stringing racquets enables Davies to make fifty thousand dollars a year exclusive of what he picks up in competitions, but Deuchar, as a tournament player only, has to win everything in sight just to make expenses. Furthermore, Deuchar has no court to call his own—an especially difficult problem in Britain, where some facilities are fully booked two weeks in advance. And not only does he have to find a place to play, he also has to find topflight competition to hone his game. (Davies, by contrast, can get all the playing time he needs on one of the courts at the Racquet Club, and has plenty of competition in Gooding, the professionals Ken Jacobs and Geoff Kennedy, and members such as Morris Clothier, the United States Amateur champion, and Henry Bunis.)


THE MEN FROM THE PASTA SQUAD KNOW THEIR STUFF.
REMEMBER, AL DENTE.
HEY, THIS ISN'T MY FIRST RODEO, PAL.

Chris Ronaldson has analyzed the game extensively and pulled together his thoughts in a lucidly written book entitled "Tennis: A Cut Above the Rest." He has played Deuchar more than anyone else has, and knows every aspect of his game. Last January, Ronaldson talked about Davies and Deuchar in his apartment at Hampton Court Palace—a perk that comes with managing the royal court. "Lachie can be an up-and-down player, especially compared with Wayne," he said. "He's faster around the court, he hits the ball harder, he's more volatile in temperament, he wears his heart on his sleeve. He can be more brilliant on his day. He can do a wide range of brilliant shots where Wayne will settle for brilliant volleys and forehand kills. Lachie's pace will be Wayne's biggest problem. If Wayne is used to having a quarter of a second"—to return a ball—"now he'll have a fifth. Lachie's other strength is that he's becoming meaner with errors."

Ronaldson successfully defended the world championship against Davies in 1983 and 1985, then lost to him in 1987. He had gone to an English public school, and as champion had carried himself with notable dignity. He has always felt a duty to be an ambassador of the game, and privately finds Davies lacking in this regard. But he is generous in assessing his successor's talent. "His main strength is that he is error-free, and this is the mark of all champions," he said. "They play for very long periods and make a minimum of errors. He has good racquet-face control, which gives him very good control over the ball. He's strong on the forehand and, knowing that he isn't strong on the backhand, he tends to be just steady on that side. He's very powerful on loose balls on the forehand side. Wayne is a planned player who locks on to what he wants to do. His principle is to create a good rhythm for himself, whereas a lot of players are more concerned with destroying the rhythm of their opponents. When he's in that groove, he's almost unstoppable. If he loses the initiative, then he's not quite so good. He has a Plan A, and if that doesn't work he has a Plan B to fall back on. He's not as resourceful as some players. Frankly, he's so good that he doesn't have to be. When he's under extreme pressure, he sort of goes into a defensive mode, where he quietly chips stuff back and hopes that the storm coming from his opponent will blow over. He has won some crucial matches this way."

In court tennis, as in every game, the top players make everything look easy; their grooved strokes, practiced footwork, and uncanny ability to read the direction of their opponents' shots convey an impression of a game played in slow motion. In reality, the speed and spin of the ball are breathtaking for a moderate player who takes the court with a Davies or a Deuchar. It is like standing in the batter's box against Nolan Ryan. The ball sails and dips, and sometimes just getting out of the way is challenge enough. When I played a set with Davies, he declined to smash the ball directly at the *dedans* but instead boasted it off the main wall into the *dedans*, leaving me flat-footed and out of harm's way. Against Deuchar, I casually asked what handicap seemed fair. "I don't care," he said pleasantly. "It all depends on how badly you want to get crushed." I proudly announced that we would play at scratch. Deuchar's serve was not intimidating, and I volleyed several of his offerings with good pace and cut, briefly entertaining thoughts of laying down short chases in the forehand corner. Each time, the ball miraculously flew back, as if it had hit a backboard, and landed at the foot of the tambour or under the grille—a winner either way. The humbled amateur managed to win two points in the entire set. "When a moderate player hits the ball, it looks slow to me," Deuchar said consolingly.

At least, being massacred by the best players in the world helped me understand how they would match up against each other. If I could volley Deuchar's serve, that meant that Davies could, too—and Davies' volley of serve, which bends and curls, is his most telling weapon. By the same token, if Deuchar could effortlessly return my best shots, then Davies would have to work for every point; against Deuchar, balls that would be outright winners or

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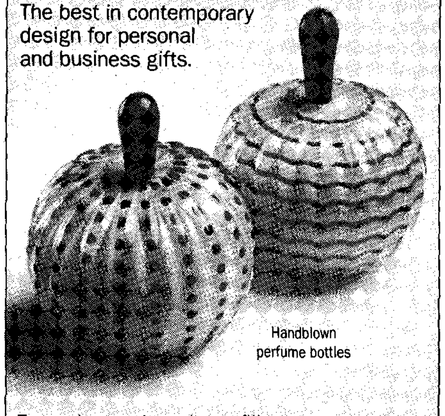

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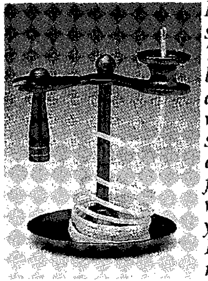

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short chases against mere mortals would become just another comma in a long rally.

The Racquet Club's famous East Court, the site of sixteen world-championship matches, would be as much of a factor as the players themselves. It is "severe," meaning that the floor and the walls hold a well-cut ball for a nanosecond, preventing it from bouncing high in the air. This quality favors an attacker, like Davies, over a retriever, like Deuchar, for the retriever finds himself under constant pressure just to get the ball back. "What started to set me apart from everybody else was the way I cut the ball," Davies told me. "I hold the racquet differently." When Davies holds the racquet straight in front of him, he's looking almost squarely at the racquet head, as if it were a mirror. A moderate player—not to mention a novice—would have trouble getting the ball over the net with this grip. "On a fast court with a true penthouse, I'm devastating," he said. "I just cut the ball too hard. They can't get it back." Since losing a match to Ronaldson in 1981, Davies had lost only one set in New York—to Deuchar, in the 1988 world championship. "This court suits me. But it suited me from the moment I arrived. It wasn't that anyone taught me how to play it, or because I practice on it."

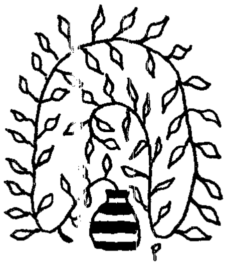
As Deuchar trained, in Britain and New York, he fretted to the point of anger about having to make his challenge at the Racquet Club. "The hardest thing about Wayne is his return of serve," he told me. "He's got a very good main-wall-*dedans* force and a very good volley. It's awfully hard to get a serve past those two shots. The railroad is O.K. there. The trouble is, nothing else exists. If you could play Wayne on a court where you could actually serve, you could cut down on his two best shots."

The railroad serve, which was developed in this country and was briefly known as the American serve, had a profound effect on the game. Tennis historians speculate that the word "service" derived from the royal custom of having a servant hit the first ball. That was a convenient way of putting the ball in play, but it left the server at a disadvantage, since the receiver usually got an easy ball to return. As the game became more competitive, players began putting spin on the ball and serving to a length that made returns more difficult. Even so, the serve was not an attacking shot, because having to place it on the penthouse roof detracted from its pace and spin. But in the railroad the server finally had a potent weapon. When the railroad lands, it kicks back toward the sidewall, away from the receiver; a well-struck railroad bounces low and hugs the wall, making an effective return difficult, if not impossible.

For the novice, trying to return a good railroad is one of the great frustrations of the game. Since the ball is coming toward you from the penthouse in an arc, it is natural to expect it to bounce in the same direction; that is, toward you. When it hops back the other way, you are left flailing at air. The moderate player has an easier time getting his racquet on the ball, but his lunging returns produce a discouraging number of errors. The top players can cream a lacklustre railroad—a force into the *dedans* is a favorite response—and are able to return good ones, occasionally with deadly precision. At that level, the server needs other serves to keep the receiver off balance, just as a hard-throwing pitcher needs a curve and a changeup.

As Deuchar knew, such variety is particularly important when playing Davies, who can pick off most railroads in the air and drill them into the corner with heavy cut. When Deuchar said that no other serve "exists" in New York, he meant that the New York court is inhospitable to the two serves that could neutralize Davies' hard volleys: the giraffe, a lofted serve that bounds out parallel to the back wall from the side penthouse, and the boomerang, which bounces off the rear penthouse and back to the side penthouse, and then kicks out along the back wall. The object is to pin the returner against the back wall, and thereby give him very little hitting room, so that his return will be feeble at best.

ON the first day of the championship, a crowd of two hundred, some of whom had paid a hundred and seventy-five dollars for seats in the *dedans*, was as keyed up as the players. Davies got a raucous ovation—an achievement in itself, since in 1985 he had embarrassed the club by wearing pink nail polish on several fingers when he unsuccessfully challenged Ronaldson in London. Davies' first marriage had been crumbling then, and he'd been, by his own reckoning, "over the top." He said of that occasion, "I obviously wanted attention—the Andre Agassi syndrome. It was a miracle I didn't get fired." The excitement that filled the East Court seemed to surprise even the spectators, whose bespoke suits reflected the British reserve that still rules the intensely private, old-line clubs of New York. As athletes say, it was a "good crowd." Not only did the spectators understand the complex rules but almost all were active players themselves, and so appreciated the fine points in a way that crowds at a boxing match seldom can. They knew when a player made a difficult shot look easy, when he made a mental error, when luck decided a point. It was like an orchestra playing to a house packed with musicians. There were no misplaced "Bravo!"s.



In the third game of the first set, Davies netted a ball and muttered "Just nerves." The players *were* jittery, and afterward both said they had been no better than eighty per cent of their best. If so, their adrenaline more than made up for the missing twenty per cent. The first set was a doozy primarily because Davies let himself get sucked into playing Deuchar's game The result was some of the best retrieving ever seen by any of the great players sitting at courtside. In the modern game, the players go after everything, hoping to half-volley the ball before the walls play havoc with t. They stay so close to the floor that hey seem to be scrambling around like crabs. When they're trying to scoop out balls just inches off the floor, they suddenly drop from view, and the only sign of human activity is the ball heading over the net in the opposite direction. With Davies leading 5–4, Deuchar hit wo splendid shots under the grille to ie the set. In the next, and final, game—in court tennis, a player does not have to win by two games or prevail in a tiebreaker—both players had two set points before Deuchar inally made good on his third. The referee, Pete Bostwick, exhaled as if he had been holding his breath for most of the last game, and said, "Boy, hat was *some* tennis!"

With the second set tied at 2–all, Deuchar took the lead in spectacular fashion, hitting a sharp return between his legs which found the grille. He allowed Davies only one point in the next game, and seemed headed for a two-set lead. But Davies pulled himself together, surrendering only two points in the two succeeding games and tying the set with a blast into the grille. His next two shots also hit the grille, and he closed out the set, 6–4.

Davies' momentum carried over into the third set, and he won the first three games in routine fashion. But he lost the fourth game at love and lost the fifth after twenty-four gruelling points. Then the balance shifted again, and Davies breezed through two games, with Deuchar at love. Deuchar, behind 5–2, made a decision that broke the rhythm of the match: he put aside his railroad and began using the giraffe on first serve. "I had lost nine of eleven games," he said afterward. "It was definitely Plan B." He closed to 5–3, and was at deuce in the next game before losing the set. But he had given Davies something to think about. The world champion had entered the match convinced that no one could use the giraffe effectively on the East Court.

With the score tied at 3–all in the fourth set, Deuchar and Davies again banged away at each other for twenty-four points. Davies saved one game point with a Hail Mary lob into the grille; he saved another with an ace off his railroad. Then the fates turned against him. He hit the edges of the grille on two consecutive shots—one ball ricocheted off three sides—without winning a point. He went on to lose the fourth set, 6–3. "That could turn out to be critical," Graham Hyland, Davies' sparring partner and court tactician, said when the players went to the dressing room. "If Wayne wins the set, he wins the match. If he loses the set, it tips the scale slightly back into Lachie's favor." For the spectators, the deadlock on the first day had been exhilarating. "It was the best tennis we'll ever see," said the writer and court-tennis aficionado George Plimpton.

Staying even with the champion on his home court boosted the confidence of the Deuchar camp. Not only is it next o impossible to rally from a 3–1 deficit but a 2–2 outcome on the first day meant that the championship now

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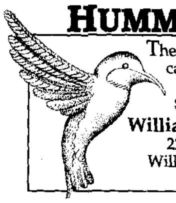

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hinged on nine sets rather than thirteen—and, as any oddsmaker knows, the shorter the contest, the greater the chance the underdog has of getting some good breaks and coming out on top. Another cause for optimism, although Deuchar didn't know it at the time, was that Davies' left hamstring had begun to stiffen up in the third set, and it limited his mobility in the fourth. "Now it's an athletic contest," Davies said the next morning, with his customary bravado. "Whoever wants most to win is going to come out on top."

Prince Edward arrived in time for the second day and took his seat in the first row of the *dedans* without disturbing the sang-froid of the audience. (His security man sat inconspicuously on a stool at the rear of the *dedans.*) After all, hadn't the Duke of Windsor been a member of the club, even keeping an ample supply of cigars in his personal bin in the humidor? Now His Royal Highness quietly rooted for Deuchar, who, because of his London residency and his friendship with Ronaldson, Edward's coach, seemed closer than Davies to being a Briton. But the Prince had little to cheer about, for Davies jumped to a 4–1 lead in the first set. "I was so much more confident," Davies said afterward. "It seemed so much easier. I wish I had played with that kind of composure the first day." Deuchar nonetheless climbed back to 5–all. By then, Davies had more than countered Deuchar's gamesmanship. For one thing, he had unveiled his own giraffe. What was more exasperating to Deuchar, though, was that Davies stopped fetching faults and let the marker run out to get the ball while he calmly got ready for the second serve. Davies and Hyland had devised the tactic because they felt that Deuchar had been quick-serving on the first day. Though that was debatable, there was nothing in the rule book requiring the receiver to chase down dead balls rolling around the court. In any event, each player now thought that the other was engaging in bush-league stunts, and, given the scratchiness between them, it was hard to imagine that they had been doubles partners—to say nothing of Davies' having named his son Lachlan.

Although it was still early on the second day, Deuchar and Davies had reached a critical juncture: after four hours of play, each had won two sets and five games. On the first point, Deuchar lofted his giraffe, and Davies cracked an unplayable shot to his backhand. The same sequence occurred on the next point, putting Davies ahead 30–love. At 30–15, Davies dug the ball out from the under the grille and hit a screaming force into the *dedans* for a winner. They switched sides to [illegible] off a Chase 1 and a Chase 2—a difficult task even for a world-class player. When Deuchar missed Chase 1 by more than a yard, in the process of losing the game, Davies let out a whooping "Yes!"

The tournament-tough Deuchar did not crumble He jumped to a 3–1 lead in the next set and seemed to have regained his rhythm and confidence, but once again the match had reached a pivotal moment The players went toe-to-toe in a half-hour, thirty-eight-point game tha jangled the nerves and showed the glories of the sport: rocketing railroads and precision giraffes, balls cut so severely that they fell like shot bird after hitting the wall, returns boasted from one side of the court to the other It was indeed chess inside a pinbal machine. Davies had eight game points Deuchar five. On the thirty-seventh point, Davies cut a forehand into the corner for Chase 2. They switched sides, and once again Deuchar could not match Davies' stingy chase.

In the next game, Davies scored an ace on a giraffe, and reflexively yelled "In your face!" He won that game and the players split the next two games to even the set at 4–4. Deucha seemed to lose heart in the ninth gam when he just missed coming back from a 40–love deficit. Davies won the fina game of the set at love, as Deucha made three unforced errors in [illegible] row

With each game on the second day Davies seemed steelier, and surer o his strokes. "He started making mor shots, which led him to try more shots and his confidence snowballed," Graham Hyland said later. Deuchar, meanwhile, could see the match slipping through his fingers. With the player tied 2–all in the third set, Deucha went up 30–love, but then he mad racquet errors on four consecutive points giving away the game and the lead

Deuchar won only one point in the next game and threw his racquet down in frustration. The old boys in the *dedans* winced: the great amateurs had never behaved this way—or so it seemed through the polished lens of memory. Trailing 4–2, Deuchar showed signs of pulling himself together, but then he did the unthinkable: he double-faulted when defending chase a yard—a grave error for a lesser player, not to mention the challenger in the world championship. Disgusted with himself, he lost the last game of the set at love.

Up three sets to love for the day, exhausted mentally and physically, but knowing that he had a commanding lead going into the final day no matter what, Davies visibly let down in the fourth set. "Wayne should have just walked to the net, handed the marker the balls, and said, 'Let's go home,' " Hyland said. In fact, it would have been a prudent course. As the set progressed, close observers of Davies' game noticed that something was terribly wrong. He was standing almost straight up when he hit his forehand—a stance that took his body weight out of the stroke and made it nearly impossible to impart heavy cut. His left hamstring would no longer support his weight when he tried to play low to the floor. (Several days later, doctors found that he had a knot of broken capillaries that had turned the back of his leg a deep purple, as if he had suffered a huge bruise.)

That evening, the Racquet Club put on a championship dinner in its refurbished dining room. As interest in the match had increased, so, apparently had the members' appetites. The number of reservations grew until the crowd overflowed into the adjacent bar. Prince Edward and his party were ushered in first, since it was thought that he was fatigued from his transatlantic journey, and he gamely joined the buffet line. ("I[illegible] the first time he's done that since Gordonstoun," said one club member, referring to the Prince's boarding school in Scotland.)

Something about wine and royalty brings out the rough side of Australians. "Hi, Prince," Davies said with enthusiasm when he was introduced. Edward did not flinch. Just before dessert, Graham Hyland sat down next to Edward—with the aim, he later explained, of putting him at ease. No matter that Edward was obviously at ease already. Hyland is a gifted raconteur, and his sense of humor is wonderfully cracked. He told Prince Edward how court-tennis pros divide the population in two, putting the favored few on the Lunatic List and less entertaining souls on the Dead List. He also took great delight in recounting how the very proper Ronaldson had tampered with one of Her Majesty's passports, substituting a picture of a goat for that of his sister-in-law. Then he launched into an extended account of the Arrow Game, played back in Hobart: a hunting arrow with two holes in its head is shot straight up into the night sky; the players race for position in a prescribed area; then they listen for the arrow, which makes a whistling sound as air rushes through its holes, and pray to God that it comes down on someone else's skull. Prince Edward laughed as heartily as an Aussie in a pub. By then, only a few waiters were left in the dining room; the first guest in was the last to leave.

DEUCHAR, in his workout with Ronaldson the next morning, had a hard look, and struck the ball with an edge of anger. The hours of practice that had brought him to this pinnacle were never more evident, as ball after ball flew off his racquet and hit the desired spot on the floor, the tambour, or the winning openings. "I feel I've been cautious since I've been here," Deuchar said after coming off the court. "I feel there's an extra difference in Wayne's control of the ball and mine. He has precision—he can put the ball where he wants to. I can't. I'll try for a little more pace, maybe. I still feel I'm playing like a turkey. I'm not hitting good shots, I'm on the wrong end of every rally, I scramble around, but I just don't feel comfortable. If I lose this, I'll look back and say it was my failure to bring my best form on the right day."

While Deuchar was on court, Davies used the weightless environment of the pool to get the brittleness out of his legs. He had one of the club's masseurs rub, squeeze, and karate-chop the tied-up muscle in his left hamstring. Andy Solomon, his trainer, stretched every part of Davies' body that ended in "oid." Thus refreshed, Davies went upstairs and hit balls to fine-tune his touch. With a 5–3 lead in sets, Davies had to win only two of four sets to retain his world championship. On an

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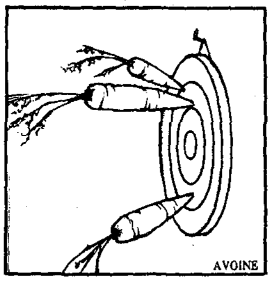
5. Contest winner has until January 31, 1992, to redeem his/her prize.

ADVERTISEMENT

ordinary day, that would be a routine matter. But, as he and Hyland knew, Friday would be no ordinary day. Davies would go on court aware that his hamstring could give way completely at any time and cost him the championship.

Deuchar played with utter confidence in the first set of the final day. He all but blew Davies off the court, winning 6–1. His movements were wonderfully fluid as he made one spectacular retrieve after another. He hit the ball with more authority than he had earlier in the match, and, more important, he hit the right shots at the right time. His 6–1 victory brought him to 4–5 in sets, and Davies was showing signs of wear. Not only was he not getting down on his forehand but many of Deuchar's shots found him going away from the ball. That meant that his legs were breaking down: he couldn't change direction when his anticipation failed him. Suddenly, it was no longer a matter of Davies' winning a mere two sets. The new math in the galleries went something like this: if Deuchar tied it at 5–all, then the match would come down to whoever won two out of three sets, and the fitter challenger would have the advantage. When Davies did his sums, he reached the same answer. "If it goes to 5–all, I think he'll win," he told me afterward, describing how he'd felt at the time.



Hyland, however, was using a different set of numbers. In effect, the other spectators were speed handicappers: they looked at the splits after the first quarter mile and saw Deuchar stealing the race. Hyland looked at past performances—at form—and saw that Davies had won seventeen of his twenty-six tournament matches with Deuchar over the years. He concluded that Deuchar was exhausting himself with his burst of early speed. "Look, Lachie's pace is up twenty-five per cent," Hyland said after the match. "But you know he can't keep it up. It's not his normal game. And when you get under pressure you can only do what you normally do."

Play in the next set was superior, with both men making breathtaking gets and hitting winning openings with greater frequency than before. The conventional wisdom seemed to be taking its course. Davies was practically erect when he hit his forehand; what had been the most devastating shot in court tennis was now merely ordinary. His hamstring had reduced his mobility to the point where he didn't even try to change directions when he was fooled by a shot.

Deuchar went up 5–3 and held two set points. Here was the moment of pressure that Hyland had anticipated—when the contest would revert to form. With Deuchar defending Chase 3, Davies volleyed his serve across court. Deuchar hit a firm forehand down the main wall that seemed laser-guided for the grille. But it sailed about a foot high, and when it bounced down from the penthouse Davies had just enough room to take it on his forehand. This time, he didn't have to bend. The ball bounced high off the floor, and he bashed it to Deuchar's backhand for a winner. Davies then laid down a chase a little more than a yard from the wall. They switched sides, and Deuchar tried to match this brilliant floor shot with one of his own, only to see it snared by the net. "That was the match right there," Ronaldson said later.

With Deuchar derailed by his missed opportunity, Davies fought back to 5–5 and forged ahead to set point. Now the gods rewarded his guts and perseverance. He lofted a shot that grazed the main wall and then plunked into the grille.

"Whee-ew," said Davies in a stage whisper, turning to catch Prince Edward's eye.

"Big shots at the right time," whispered the referee, Bostwick.

Deuchar won the first two games of the next set, but he knew that the odds were heavily against him. Davies, having found his rhythm, played difficult balls with discipline and cracked easy balls for winners. With Deuchar's competitive strength sapped, Davies reeled off the next six games to hold on to his silver championship plate. "I was fabulous how Wayne fought his way back in," Prince Edward said. "He lost seven games in a row and somehow turned it around." Deuchar had not brought his best form on the right day, and he was furious with himself as he rushed off the court. He made a beeline for the dressing room, and showered and dressed while Davies was still accepting handshakes; it took the coolheaded Ronaldson to coax him to the award ceremony. When Deuchar rose to congratulate the champion no one would have guessed that his camp was frantically arranging to catch the next plane to London, to get back to the comforts of home and away from the scene of defeat.

As for Davies, he slowly made his way to the professionals' dressing room, in the upper reaches of the Racquet Club. It is a long, narrow room that resembles an Edwardian attic. As in the members' dressing room, two flights below, the walls are lined with wood-panelled dressing cubicles. Fresh shorts, shirts, and jocks were piled up in each cubicle—a necessity for men who spend their days drenching their clothes with sweat and then cooling down like racehorses. Davies' wife, Beth, was there, and so were Hyland, Mike Gooding, Kenny Jacobs, and the squash pros. Someone broke open a bottle of champagne, and Davies took a swig and passed the bottle along. The champion, lying on his back and doing his stretches as he would after any workout, pulled the right leg flush with his chest; the damaged left came only half as far. "I'm very, very, very gone," Davies groaned. "Bloody nervous was what I was. God, my stomach—I feel sick."

Hyland looked at him and said, with a smile, "I'd be pretty upset, too, if I were world champion."

To be world champion in any sport demands intense focus on a goal; to stay on top requires a psychological stamina known to only a few. Most people tire of their jobs in a matter of years without having to face the pressure of being the very best at what they do. The way Davies pushes himself to strike a small white ball *just so* is nothing short of obsessive. Within ten minutes of winning the title match, he was talking about how hard he planned to train for the British Open in December—a tournament that he has played in six times but has never won. "My doctor wants me to retire," he said, with a trace of Aussie contrariness in his tone. "But I feel I still have *x* miles left in my legs. If I'm holding up well, if my knees aren't hurting, you'll see me here in two years, defending against Lachie or whomever."

—Stephen G. Smith

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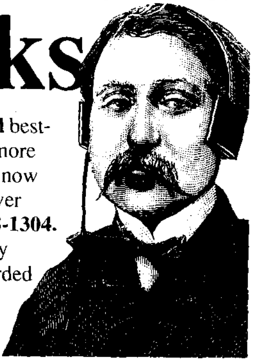

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JAZZ

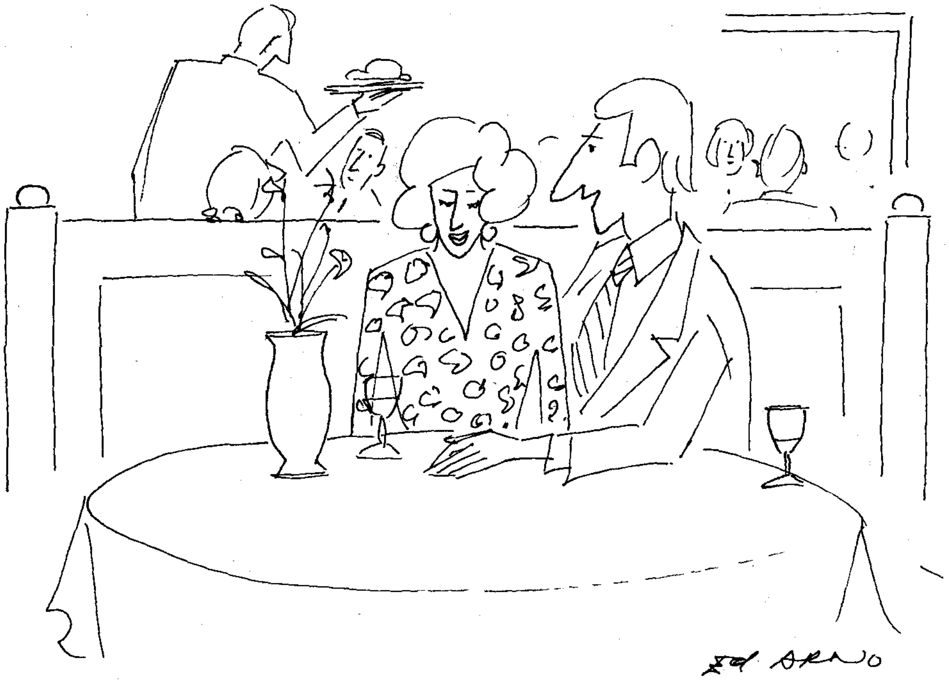
An Insouciant Sound

THE pianist Marian McPartland likes to do a little writing on the side, and several years ago she gathered thirteen of her appreciations and published them in a book called "All in Good Time." One of the best chapters, written in 1960, is about the alto saxophonist Paul Desmond. It was a pioneering, restorative essay. Desmond, a member of the immensely popular Dave Brubeck Quartet since 1951 and a steady winner of the *Down Beat* readers' poll since 1955, had been temporarily eclipsed by a Charlie Parker soundalike, Cannonball Adderley, and by the avant-gardist Ornette Coleman, and no one had yet written about Desmond with any perception. McPartland made it clear that he was a writer manqué who had become a jazz musician almost by accident, that he was the only major alto saxophonist of his generation who had not modelled himself on Parker, and that he was witty, original, and elusive. The little there is on Desmond's early life in her chapter is about as much as he ever gave out. He was born Paul Emil Breitenfeld on November 25, 1924, in San Francisco (and died of cancer in 1977 in New York). He took his nom de saxophone from the telephone book. (He said Breitenfeld sounded "too Irish.") His father was German and played the organ in movie theatres, and his mother was Irish and had a literary bent. He loved his father and tolerated his mother. When he was five, his mother became ill, and he was sent to relatives in New Rochelle. He played a solo on chimes at a school assembly, and, instead of following the notes in front of him, he improvised. "It was the first thing I'd enjoyed doing," he told Marian McPartland. "I was kind of a walking vegetable as a kid. Amiable but unfocussed. I didn't realize until about fifteen years later that you could make a living doing this." He returned to San Francisco in 1936 and took up the clarinet and, several years later, the alto saxophone. He spent three years in an Army band in San Francisco during the war, and studied writing briefly at San Francisco State College. He and Dave Brubeck first played together in 1943, and Desmond claimed that this colloquy took place:

Desmond, after hearing Brubeck, who tended to play way out: "Man, like Wigsville! You really grooved me with those nutty changes."

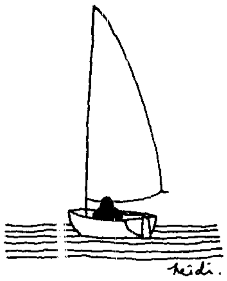
Brubeck: "White man speak with forked tongue."

Desmond and Brubeck met again after the war, in the Geary Cellar in San Francisco, and Desmond described their second encounter this way: "The musical rapport was very evident and kind of scary. A lot of the things we've done since, we did then, *immediately*—a lot of the counterpoint things, and it really impressed me. If you think Dave plays far out now, you should have heard him then. He made Cecil Taylor sound like Lester Lanin." Brubeck worked briefly for Desmond (who concluded that he was not cut out to be a leader), Desmond worked briefly for Brubeck, and in 1951 they started the Quartet. They made three live recordings on a small label—"Jazz at Storyville," "Jazz at Oberlin," and "Jazz at the College of the Pacific"—and they caught fire. Columbia Records signed the Quartet in 1954, and it became the most commercially successful jazz group in history. (George Avakian, the jazz scholar and A. & R. man, was working for Columbia at the time, and in July of that year, during a bus ride from New York to the first Newport Jazz Festival, he told me that Columbia was trying to decide whether to sign the Brubeck Quartet or the equally new, though not yet successful, Modern Jazz Quartet. The golden remains of the Brubeck group were long ago cast up on the shores of jazz—it disbanded in 1967—while the M.J.Q., going on forty, continues on its subtle, classic, imperturbable way.)



"I love the way you never mention love."

In its final form—Brubeck, Desmond, Gene Wright on bass, and Joe Morello on drums—the Dave Brubeck Quartet was one of the curiosities of jazz. Brubeck and Desmond were opposites. Desmond had a light, ethereal tone, and his solos were lyrical and singing and beautifully constructed. Brubeck, who had studied with Darius Milhaud and had dreamed of fusing jazz and classical music, was a heavy, erratic, passionate player who depended on repetition and difficult harmony for his effects. He could build a frightening rhythmic momentum with figures of almost no musical interest. Desmond was a blue summer day; Brubeck was thunder and lightning. Yet each man insisted that he would never have got anywhere without the other. Brubeck said Desmond was the best saxophone player in the world, and Desmond said, "I still feel more kinship musically with Dave than with anyone else." The critics loved to jump up and down on Brubeck, and, assuming guilt by association, they tended to dismiss Desmond, too, or take him for granted. (He only once won a *Down Beat* critics' poll, though he won the readers' poll eleven times—a rare instance of the public's having better ears than the professionals.) Although Desmond managed on occasion to free himself of Brubeck's rhythmic weight, his best recordings were made in duets with the guitarist Jim Hall or with the baritone saxophonist Gerry Mulligan. (Mosaic has reissued all the lilting and irresistible recordings Desmond and Hall made, and RCA has reissued Desmond and Mulligan's "Two of a Mind.")



Many of Desmond's closest friendships were made after the Brubeck group broke up and he settled in New York. (He had a one-bedroom penthouse on the northeast corner of Fifty-fifth Street and Sixth Avenue.) At the age of forty-three, he more or less retired. He made some festival appearances, went to a Brubeck reunion, and took sporadic jobs with Jim Hall in New York and with the guitarist Ed Bickert in Toronto. He was intelligent and social, and much of his time was spent, Scotch in hand, at Elaine's or Bradley's, talking and listening, and living a fine eighteenth-century life.

Jim Hall recently spoke about Desmond: "I met Paul in the fifties in Cleveland when I was still a student and he came through with Dave Brubeck. But I feel like I've known him all my life. When he was around so much in the sixties and seventies, he'd come over nearly every week to play Scrabble with my wife, Jane. They were so good I just watched. He also played chess, and the piano in his apartment was covered with chessboards. He liked long-standing comical situations. Every time he ate at the French Shack, around the corner from his apartment, he and one of the waiters would get into a thing about the pronunciation of 'vichyssoise.' He loved a paperback book called 'Tops in Pops.' It had stuff on Fabian and Chubby Checker and Elvis and Anita Bryant, and the writing was awful. He'd buy a dozen copies and give them to his friends, and he'd call up—'Hi, it's me, Desmond'—at all hours and read passages from the book and laugh. And, of course, he'd walk a mile for a pun, like the one he'd invented about all those models who eventually marry rich guys: 'This is the way the world ends,' he'd say. 'Not with a whim but a banker.' And he loved to josh people. He made several records with George Avakian, who tended to do a lot of telephoning in the control booth. Once, he and I finished a take and looked up at the booth to see what Avakian's reaction was. He was on the telephone, so when he hung up Desmond went out in the hall and called him from a public telephone. 'Hi, George, it's Paul,' he said. 'How was the last take?' He always seemed to be around lively people—bright, sparkly people. He was a no-fooling good musician, who could improvise the most gorgeous melodies—some were better than the originals. He also played the piano, and he was pretty good. After he got sick, he had a roadie who came in and did some cooking and let people in and out. One afternoon, when he was sleeping off a chemotherapy session, Charlie Mingus came to see him. Mingus was big then, and he was wearing a black cloak and a big black hat, and he sat down in a chair in Paul's bedroom and waited for him to wake up. When he did, Paul said he looked over and saw this huge black form sitting there and thought, 'Oh, God. This is it. They've come for me.' He's heavily missed. The trouble is, he would have made a great older person."

Desmond became a regular at Elaine's, at Eighty-eighth Street and Second Avenue. He and the writer Jack Richardson were good friends. "I met Paul around 1968," Richardson said the other day. "We had dinner together a couple of times a week, generally at Elaine's or Bradley's or Casey's. He was a wonderful person to spend time with in a saloon. He loved language, and he got off great one-liners. His social life was spent more with writers and such than with musicians. You'd find him at Elaine's with Bruce Friedman or Frank Conroy or Gay Talese. Elaine's is a strange place. There can be a kind of superficiality there in the talk about writing and art. But everyone always agreed that Paul was one of the few true artists who hung out there. He was a magical presence. Paul implied that he had led a rather puritanical life with the Brubeck Quartet, and that he was going to make up time by indulging in every sort of depravity. He was a good drinker, but he sometimes drank too much and had to be helped home. And he used to dabble in cocaine, which he had come to late in life. He had countless

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women friends, but he never had a steady girl. I think women had a quasi-custodial relationship with him, nursing him through illnesses and bad hangovers. I felt he was very lonely, that he had a great deal of sadness in him.

“He didn’t like to talk music with non-musicians. I passed, because I played a little guitar. In fact, he was so distressed after he heard me play he sent me to Jim Hall for lessons. Paul knew his virtues and his limitations. He had never followed in Charlie Parker’s footsteps, but I remember once when we looked at a transcription of some fantastic Parker solo, Paul said, ‘My God! That’s not human!’ I asked him once why he had stayed with Brubeck so long, and he gave two reasons: that he had no head for money and Dave handled all the financial things, all the headaches about leading a group and carrying it around the world; and, second, that Brubeck, being so different, set him off, gave him a frame to stand out against. He felt that when he and Jim Hall played together they were so similar, so simpatico, they were in danger of evaporating. His cancer was diagnosed about a year before he died, and his main concern seemed to be that his illness not cause any embarrassment or dislocation among his friends. And it never did. He handled his affliction with grace and delicacy and unselfishness to the very end.”

DESMOND’S humor was slightly arch, self-deprecating (always the sign of a true sense of humor), punning, and full of hyperbole. Here are some samples:

When he was once asked about his delicate, dry tone, he replied, “Well, I had it in mind that I wanted to sound like a dry Martini.”

He liked to call himself “the J. P. Marquand of the saxophone” and, because he detested fast tempos, “the world’s slowest alto player.”

When he played with unsympathetic musicians, he said, he tended to “shrivel up like a lemoned clam.”

On his own reputation: “I was unfashionable before anyone knew who I was.”

On Ornette Coleman, who arrived in New York in 1959 and turned the jazz world on its ear: listening to Coleman, whom he admired, was “like living in a house where everything’s painted red.”

ON THE PENINSULA

Lit from below, the blue water
flows to us on three sides.
Yellow crabs scuttle across the sand
and the moon sails over the mountains.
The stars are set close and bright—
it would take us a dozen human lifetimes,
travelling at the speed of light,
to reach the nearest one.
To reach the seafloor
takes less than a minute;
lungs straining, we glimpse
a million stars pinpointed
in the eyes of the fish,
schools of them hovering
in the beams of our torches
as the currents carry us from shore,
away from the rustling grass
and the deep orchard
and the house where our bodies,
locked fast, turn under a blue sheet.

—NICHOLAS CHRISTOPHER

• •

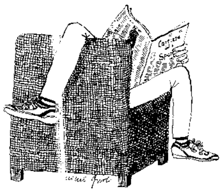
After he settled in the city: “Sometimes I get the feeling that there are orgies going on all over New York, and somebody says, ‘Let’s call Desmond,’ and somebody else says, ‘Why bother? He’s probably home reading the Encyclopædia Britannica.’ ”

On why he never became a writer: “I could only write at the beach, and I kept getting sand in my typewriter.”

But Desmond *could* write, as is clear in some of the liner notes he set down for his own albums and in the only chapter he completed of a book he planned to write about his life with the Brubeck Quartet. The book was to be called “How Many of You Are There in the Quartet?” and the chapter appeared in *Punch*. It deals with two concerts the group gave in one day at a state fair in Middletown, New Jersey, and it closes with these four paragraphs:

> The main events of the fair have clearly been planned for months: a flaming auto wreck, followed by a flaming plane wreck, each to be dealt with instantly and efficiently by the Middletown Fire Dept. At one end of the oval is a precariously balanced car; at the other end, a truly impressive skeletal mock-up of a single-engine plane, tail up. Midway, at ground zero, is the Middletown Fire Truck, bristling with ladders and hoses and overflowing with volunteers.
>
> A hush falls over the stands. At a signal given by the fire chief, the car is ignited. The truck reaches it in two or three seconds, by which time the fire is roughly equivalent to that created by dropping a cigarette on the back seat for two or three seconds. It is extinguished by many men with several hoses.
>
> A murmur falls over the stands. The fire chief, painfully aware that his moment of the year is at hand, signals for the plane to be ignited, also instructing the truck to take it easy, so that the fire should be blazing briskly when it arrives. The truck starts, at about the pace of a cab looking for a fare. The plane goes WHOOSH!, like a flashbulb, and by the time the leisurely truck arrives, has shrunk to a lovely camp-fire, just large enough for roasting marshmallows.
>
> Later, four pasty-faced, grim-eyed men pile into a station wagon and drive away. It may not be a bank-robbery, but it’s a living.

DESMOND was tall and thin. He had a narrow face and receding dark hair, and he wore black-framed glasses with heavy temples. When he played, he stood motionless, his saxophone held straight up and down, as if he were carrying a flagpole. When he had finished a solo, he would (in his Brubeck days) lean against the crook of the piano, his hands folded over his saxophone (still held close to his chest), his expression bemused and pleasant. The A. & R. man John Snyder, who recorded Desmond, recently said, “Paul had a slow way of talking, an almost singsong way. He had a low-pitched voice, and he talked like he’d always had a drink, like he had a smoking jacket on. Everything he said was insightful. He laughed a lot—a bark, a smile, then the laugh. His playing was similar. He had a kind of languid way of playing. There’s a slowness in the tone, in the notes themselves. It’s an insouciant sound, and it has a timeless golden color. He staked out a lyrical territory that was all his own. And he was a master of interpolation. He'd add bits and pieces of the countless songs he knew to his solos, putting them together in such a way that they commented on his surroundings or on an experience he had just had. And he did it in a cool way. He was never a showoff."



Despite his placidity, Desmond had a temper. The great drummer Joe Morello has recalled his own early days with the Quartet: "I joined the Quartet in October of 1956 and stayed until it broke up. I had been in Marian McPartland's trio at the Hickory House, on Fifty-second Street, and Dave and Paul would come in to hear me. I'd also been to hear them, and I had trouble with their rhythm section. Then I got a call from Brubeck asking me if I'd like to join the Quartet, and would I meet him at the Park Sheraton to talk about it? I told him that I didn't play the way his drummer played, that I didn't know if I'd enjoy the group or they would enjoy me, that I might not last a week. But we agreed I'd try it, and we opened at the Blue Note, in Chicago. Before we went on, Dave told me he'd be glad to feature me. I did a little drum solo in the second set, and there was a big ovation, and Paul stamped off the stand. Afterward, he said, 'Morello goes or I go.' Dave calmed him down, but, what with the ovations I kept getting, Paul and I didn't talk much for the first year or so. We never came to blows, as the press said we did, but there were times when I think we felt like it. Paul would tell me that if I kept my left hand at my side and just played quarter notes with my right hand everything would be O.K. Or he'd tell Dave after a set, 'My last solo would have been perfect if Joe hadn't put that accent in the last bar.' Or he'd tell me that if I didn't stop setting such fast tempos he'd take a full-page ad in *Down Beat* saying 'Paul Desmond does not play fast tempos.' Then the discomfort ended, and we practically became a clique. I think it all changed after Paul wrote his big hit 'Take Five' and realized that the tune itself, not my drum solo, was getting the ovations.

"Of course, Paul would get upset with Dave, too. Sometimes Dave would get too busy behind Paul's solos, and Paul would ask him to lay out, and if he didn't Paul would walk off the stage. He always had books with him, and he was a speed-reader. He liked to dramatize things. We were on a plane once to someplace like Afghanistan, and a dove got out of a crate and started flying around the plane. The next day, when he told the story, Paul had birds flying all over and goats running up and down the aisle. After work, we'd go to the nearest lounge or bar to have a drink and relax. But sometimes I went by myself, and the waiter would come to my table and say, 'The gentleman over there would like to buy you a Martini.' It would be Paul. I'd send him a Scotch in return, and we'd wave."

The critic and editor James T. Maher had dinner one night at Bradley's with Alec Wilder and Desmond. "The talk turned to improvisation," Maher said not long ago. "There were two Alec Wilders when it came to improvisation. One was in complete awe of it, and the other got upset if a singer changed as much as a note of one of his songs. So Desmond said, 'Well, you know, the best chorus is the song itself.' That was a real shot in the arm for Alec. When I first heard Desmond, I said to myself, 'I wish that guy would play with more feeling.' Years later, I said to myself again, 'What did you mean by "feeling"?' He kept the song singing. He was a born singer. And it was all in those absolutely pure melodic lines."

When Desmond was coming up, he listened to such alto saxophonists as the huge, jumping Pete Brown; Willie Smith, of the Jimmie Lunceford and Harry James bands; and Duke Ellington's Johnny Hodges. Most true originals absorb their models so thoroughly they can flawlessly reproduce them, or even parody them. During the seventieth-birthday party the White House threw for Duke Ellington, in 1969, Desmond, a member of the all-star group that performed in the East Room, reproduced Johnny Hodges so perfectly during one of his solos that he startled the usually unflappable Ellington. Desmond's line about wanting to sound like a dry Martini was funny but inaccurate. A dry Martini has a sharp, edgy taste, and if it had a sound it would be hard and metallic. Desmond's tone was off-white, gentle—almost transparent and almost weightless. It had a brand-new, untouched sound, he used very little vibrato, and he tended to stay in the upper half of his range. There was nothing vocal in his playing, as there

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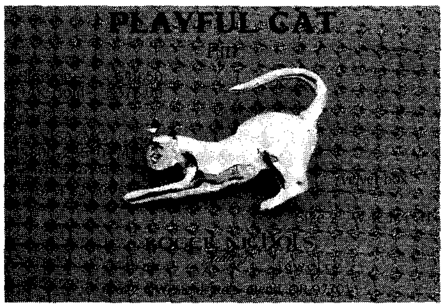

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was in Charlie Parker's and Ben Webster's. He did not preach, or moan, or shout. Desmond's solos *thought;* they had logic and clarity. He improvised melodies that were straightforward but intricate; his phrases, never breathless, would sometimes go on for sixteen or more bars. The quietness of Desmond's attack was deceptive, and gave a conventional, even timid, air to what he played. But he always moved along the outer edges of the chords he was improvising on, atonality in sight. His rhythmic attack was equally deceptive. He gave the impression of sailing along endlessly in an easy four-four, but he continually altered his time. He played behind the beat, on the beat, and ahead of the beat. He halved the tempo and doubled it, or he floated, using no tempo at all. Like his friend Jim Hall, Desmond was one of the handful of jazz improvisers who demand total concentration. If the listener falters, he is lost; if he remains rapt, he is blessed.

NOEL SILVERMAN was Desmond's lawyer and business protector during the last two years of his life. "It took a while to get to know Paul and realize how complicated he was," Silverman said not long ago. "Paul had no paranoia, like so many musicians do. He regarded the music business as the way of the world, not something organized against him. He could be immensely personable when he wanted. He was not shy. He simply didn't go out of his way to get involved in social situations he wasn't sure of. He liked sociable people, and he liked his Dewar's. By and large, he was an excellent drinker. Liquor didn't often defeat him. It was a lubricant, a way to camaraderie. He never lacked for smart female company. I think he had been married once, when he was very young, but he never talked about it.

"I suggested to him three or four months before he died that he make a will. He had no parents, no brothers or sisters, no aunts or uncles. He did have some Breitenfeld cousins that he liked and saw once in a while. I asked him if he wanted to leave something to the Brubecks, and he laughed and said they should leave something to him. But he did leave his saxophone to Michael Brubeck, one of Dave's sons. I asked him if he wanted to establish a scholarship fund for musicians, and he said no, there were already enough bad saxophone players. I asked him what he wanted to do with his piano. It's a nine-foot Baldwin. He and Dave Brubeck had each bought one years before. He said, 'Would it be possible for Bradley Cunningham to have it for his saloon?' Paul and Bradley had closed Bradley's on many, many nights, and Paul felt that the old upright Bradley had had there for years was demeaning to all the great pianists who had to play it. So there Paul's piano sits, in all its much appreciated grandeur. Then I asked him about the rest of his estate, the income from records and from songs like 'Take Five,' and he said, 'Give it to the Red Cross, they're a good outfit.' I don't have the exact figures before me, but I think the Red Cross has received over a million dollars since 1977. I'm beginning to think it's time, in fact, for it to make some sort of public recognition of Paul's generosity, instead of writing me little thank-you notes. Paul wasn't rich, but he was comfortable. I remember when he was in Mt. Sinai I took him a whole bunch of checks and we laid them out on his bed. We added them up, and they came to around a hundred thousand dollars. He laughed and said, 'Well, I don't have any financial problems.' "

When Marian McPartland finished her 1960 piece on Desmond, she showed it to him, and he said he liked it. "But, Marian, do you think it might be better to start it this way? Do you think we could take that story about Brubeck out, and put in this one?" And on, until it had become a kind of McPartland-Desmond piece. But they were always friends. "I used to ask Paul to sit in with me when I was playing in the Bemelmans Bar, in the Carlyle," she has said. "He promised that he would, but he never did. He'd just hang out and have a few drinks. The last time I saw him, he stopped by when he was quite far along with his chemo treatments. I was very pleased to see him about, but shocked at how thin he was. He had a drink, and after I had finished we went over to Elaine's. She had a piano way in the back, and I sat down and played all kinds of tunes that Paul loved. He was determined to keep his life as usual, and he just sat there serenely. He died alone in his apartment on the Memorial Day weekend of 1977. It seemed to me that he didn't want to upset his friends, and so he waited until they had all left town for the holiday weekend. His cleaning woman found him Monday morning."

—WHITNEY BALLIETT

BOOKS

Very Popular Mechanics

I COUNTED fifty-six references to coffee in Tom Clancy's new thriller, "The Sum of All Fears" (Putnam; $24.95). It's a long book, nearly eight hundred pages; still, that's a lot of coffee. Clancy's people need the caffeine, though, because freedom needs their vigilance. They are the intelligence analysts, fighter pilots, sub mariners, air-defense monitors, radar and sonar operators, secret-service agents, and other military, paramilitary, and civilian personnel on whose alertness the national security depends.

To describe Clancy's feeling for these people as respect is inadequate. He loves them; and his love includes an attentive sympathy for the special demands that a constant state of readiness, and the many cups of coffee needed to maintain it, can make. It is not unusual for one of his characters, in the midst of a sudden crisis that requires his complete concentration and on whose outcome the future of our way of life just might depend, to recall with a small but gratifying sense of relief that he has recently made a trip to the bathroom.

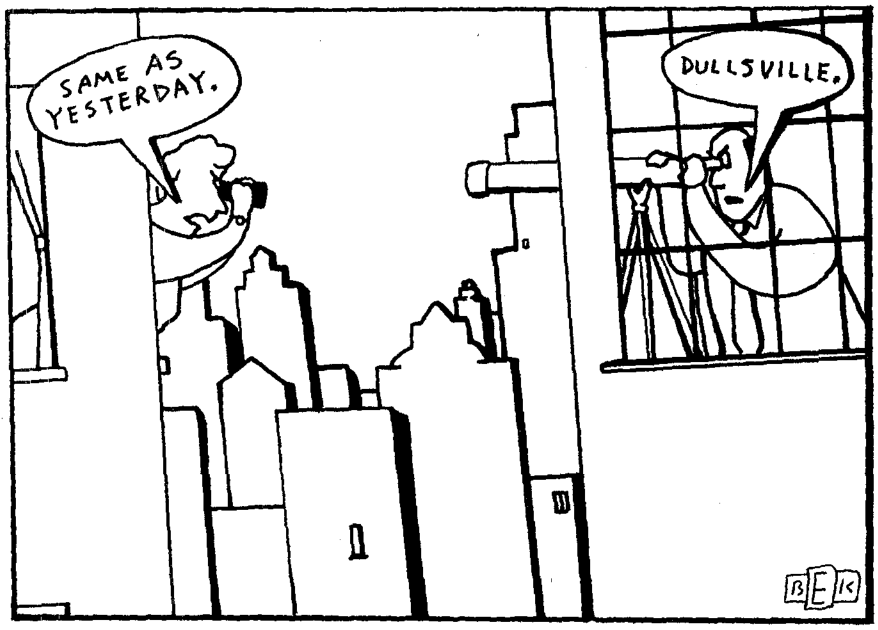
There is something charming about a writer who, out of sheer infatuation with his subject, is capable of this sort of unaffected tactlessness, and it will be pretty clear to most readers of "The Sum of All Fears" that whatever it is Tom Clancy has, success has done nothing to spoil it. Clancy's own story is by now fairly well known. Less than ten years ago, he was a Maryland insurance agent; it was a steady job, but he wanted to be a paperback writer. He wrote in the time he could spare from his work and his obligations to his family, and his first effort was published, in 1984, by the Naval Institute Press, a noncommercial publisher in Annapolis which had never handled an original work of fiction before. The novel was "The Hunt for Red October," a story about a Soviet nuclear submarine whose officers defect to the United States and bring their boat along with them. Soon after it came out, a Washington lobbyist (or so the story goes) sent a copy to the Reagans as a Christmas present. Nancy Reagan read it and passed it along to the President, who pronounced it "the perfect yarn." This well-placed endorsement (from a man who, whatever his shortcomings, does know something about yarns) helped make the book a national best-seller. Clancy quickly produced four more thrillers featuring the protagonist of "Red October"—an intelligence expert named Jack Ryan. They became best-sellers, too; the last of them, "Clear and Present Danger," which appeared in 1989, is reported to have sold more copies than any other novel published in the nineteen-eighties, and Clancy now probably earns more for his books than any other writer in the world. But his work retains its homemade character; he is still, in his relation to the world he has imagined, a slightly awestruck amateur.

The clearest sign of this is his abiding admiration for professionalism. His heroes are daring and manly enough, but they are not cowboys. They are organization men, highly trained, disciplined, clean-cut, and honest, men who know how to push the edge of the envelope without tearing it. They are impatient with weak authority, but disrespectful of it only when a point of personal honor is at stake—just as they are blunt and sometimes vulgar but never (by their own lights, at any rate) tasteless or cruel.

Their professionalism makes them decent. It also makes them, in spite of their wholesomeness, a little bit cynical: because they know how hard it is to live up to principles, they know how easy it is to cheat on them, and this knowledge makes them at times acutely aware that the world is probably not entirely worthy of their dedication to its survival, and that there is something faintly absurd about their insistence on maintaining such high standards of conduct.

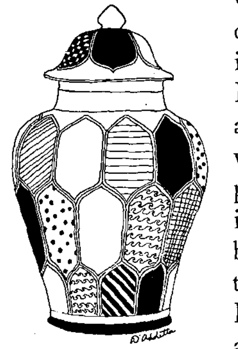
Clancy sees—and the perception is, I think, the one genuine imaginative accomplishment of his writing—that this cynicism must be a part of the kind of characters he creates. But he cannot share it. He cannot allow virtue to be its own reward; he must allot the virtuous every earthly reward, too. And he cannot allow crimes against virtue—even the most pitiful and craven ones—to escape retribution. He wants the world to be worthy of his heroes' exertions. He knows that he is writing fairy tales, but cannot keep from begging us, like Peter Pan, to clap our hands and make it so.

The idea in "The Sum of All Fears" is that the bad fairies have got hold of a nuclear bomb and it's up to the good fairies to keep them from starting the Third World War. The bad fairies here are a sorry group; after all, the world's supply of bad fairies has fallen



Voyeurs shouldn't live across from each other.

off rather sharply since 1984. In "The Hunt for Red October" Clancy was able, without departing much from official attitudes, to portray the leaders of the Soviet Union as unwashed thugs, people who routinely concluded policy disputes by having the losers shot. In "The Sum of All Fears," though, the Cold War is over, and the Soviets have become friendly and well intentioned. The Soviet military, in particular, is praised for its competence and integrity, and the Soviet President, a Gorbachev-alike called Narmonov, behaves much more nobly in the book's climactic episode than his American counterpart, a vain, ineffectual fellow (he's a liberal) called Bob Fowler.



The book begins by tidying up the one nagging trouble spot left in the new world order. It has Jack, now the deputy director of the C.I.A., whip up a peace plan for the Middle East. Jack's brainstorm is pretty simple—but then that's always the way with the really big ideas, isn't it? His plan is to evacuate the Jewish settlements on the West Bank and hand it over to the Palestinians; make Jerusalem a dominion of the Vatican governed by an interfaith troika of clerics and policed by the Swiss Guard; and guarantee Israel's security by stationing American troops there permanently. The Israelis (in an extremely feeble concession to reality) are made to have a few reservations about this plan. But the rest of the world is enthusiastic, the Israelis come to realize that it's in their interest to coöperate, and the treaty is signed by the major powers, under the vague auspices of the Pope, in a ceremony at the Vatican.

Although some people—President Fowler, for instance—are ready to beat their swords into plowshares on the spot, Jack knows better. As he observes during a diplomatic chat with a Saudi prince (over coffee that is described as "thick, bitter, and hideously strong"): "Sir, the only constant factor in human existence is change."

Two teams of spoilers quickly (well, fairly quickly) emerge. The first is made up of President Fowler and his national-security adviser, a former political-science professor from Bennington called Liz Elliot, with whom the President happens to be sleeping. (They're both single; it's not that kind of book.) They are weak, ambitious people who resent Jack's brilliance and professionalism; they refuse to give him the credit he deserves for his peace plan, and plot to drive him out of the Administration.

The other bad fairies are a multicultural coalition of terrorists led by the notorious Qati, a fanatical anti-Zionist. His principal cohorts are Günther, a former member of a defunct German terrorist outfit, and Marvin, a Native American activist. Not a very impressive array of villains, you say. But suppose these folks were to come into possession of an atomic bomb that had been lost by the Israelis in the Golan Heights during the 1973 war; and suppose they were to buy the services of a former East German nuclear engineer, and he were to use materials from that bomb to manufacture a much more powerful hydrogen bomb; and suppose they were to take this hydrogen bomb to Denver and try to detonate it at the Super Bowl in the hope of triggering a nuclear war between the United States and the Soviet Union—not because that would solve the Palestinian problem or restore the rights of Native Americans but just because they are nasty, resentful people who, thanks in part to a series of personal disappointments, are filled with general misanthropy. Suppose these things (and throw in a couple of submarines), and you have supposed "The Sum of All Fears."

For this is the most doggedly straightforward of stories. There are no puzzles to be solved and no secrets to be uncovered. We can't completely anticipate everything that is going to happen, of course, but as soon as something does happen we are almost always told everything we need to know about it. This directness pushes events forward without distraction and serves the book well when the climactic scenes are finally reached. But it is a very long way to the climax, and for the greater part of the book the sense of slowly unravelling mystery which one associates with most spy stories and other kinds of thrillers is almost entirely absent.

This is so, I think, because Clancy appears to have, as a writer, no technical resources for producing mystery. His chief device is to report a conversation and leave out the most important part. Here, for example, is Jack Ryan coming up with his peace plan during a meeting with members of the President's staff (they're drinking Coke, by the way, which, in addition to the caffeine, provides a quick energy boost):

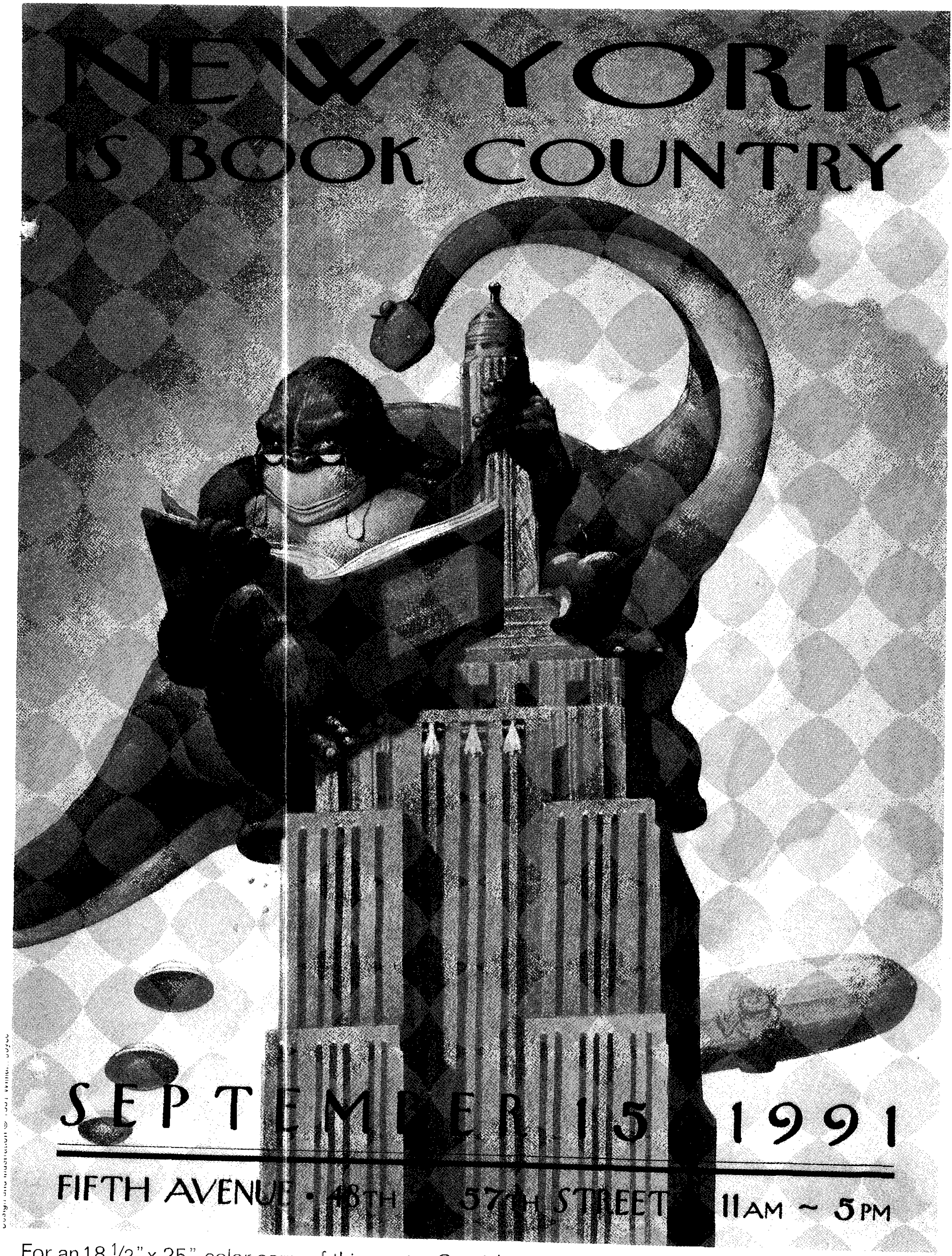
> "You thinking about something, Jack?" Alden asked.
>
> "You know, we're all 'people of the book,' aren't we?" Ryan asked, seeing the outline of a new thought in the fog.
>
> "So?"
>
> "And the Vatican is a real country, with real diplomatic status, but no armed forces . . . they're Swiss . . . and Switzerland is neutral, not even a member of the UN. The Arabs do their banking and carousing there . . . gee, I wonder if he'd go for it . . . ?" Ryan's face went blank again, and van Damm saw Jack's eyes center as the light bulb flashed on. It was always exciting to watch an idea being born, but less so when you didn't know what it was.
>
> "Go for what? *Who* go for *what*?" the Chief of Staff asked with some annoyance. Alden just waited.
>
> Ryan told them.

He doesn't tell *us*, though. It doesn't matter, since the plan is explained several chapters later and its details have no bearing on anything that happens in the interim. But it's Clancy's idea of suspense.

Jack himself, though he's a kind of superagent, is essentially an upright guy who's supposed to save the day without breaking the rules, and this means that he's never a particularly vivid character. One gets, for instance, almost no sense of what he looks like. It doesn't help much to learn, in one of the love scenes he's given (with his wife, and expressly for the purpose of making babies), that his hands are "strong but gentle." He is several times compared, by his nemesis Liz Elliot, to James Bond, and it's clear that we are supposed to regard the comparison as inaccurate, and an insult to Jack.

What is true of Jack is true of the rest of Clancy's people: they're cut out carefully along the dotted lines. If the story requires a professor, he will be absent-minded; if it requires a young cop, he will be gung ho and a little undisciplined. Politicians are fickle and self-serving, and reporters are jaded scandal-hounds. Asian-Americans have faith in education; Israelis are abrasive; Jesuit seminarians are more worldly-wise than they let on and don't mind sneaking a small glass of sherry before lunch.

That Clancy's world is mostly male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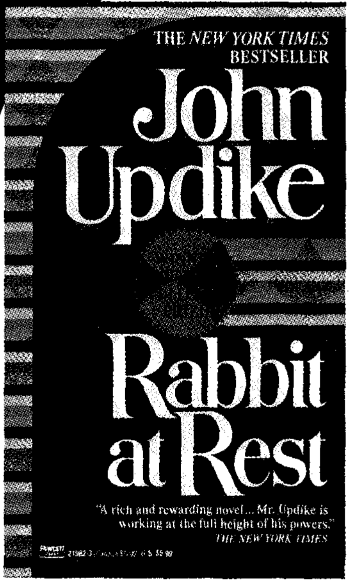
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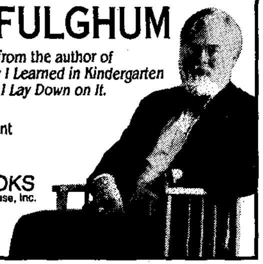
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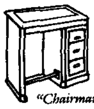

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is probably for the best, because when he creates a female character he cannot, for reasons that are not obvious to me, resist humiliating her. A female television reporter refuses to wear a bulletproof vest when she goes to interview a terrorist being staked out by the F.B.I., and when the terrorist is shot in the face and killed in front of her, his blood soaks her blouse. She is made to vomit from the shock and to rip off her shirt, "forgetting that there was nothing under it." Another woman, a convicted murderer, hangs herself in her cell after removing her dress and bra. A third, a housewife, is stripped and assassinated, and her body is sliced into pieces with a chain saw. The major female character, Liz Elliot, is grasping, contemptible, and a sexual predator. Her plots, needless to say, explode in her face, and at the end of the book her reaction to the global crisis she is supposed to help the President deal with is so hysterical that she has to be sedated.

This is all standard action-adventure stuff, no doubt, and it wouldn't be worth mentioning if it were not so unlike Clancy's treatment of his male characters. Plenty of his men die violently, and their deaths are recounted in detail that is certainly pointless enough ("The bullet entered the back of Fromm's skull, soon thereafter exiting through his forehead"), but Clancy has a kind of boyish respect for them all. Even his terrorists are accorded a certain dignity; they are, after all, by virtue of their bravery and dedication, psychotic mirror images of his heroes. But the women are punished. And not only the bad ones. Jack's wife, Cathy, though she's a crackerjack eye surgeon and supermom, is the subject of what must be one of the strangest lines ever written to conclude a love scene: "And then it was over, and he lay at her side. Cathy pulled him against her, his face to her regrettably flat chest."

Clancy's reputation is based not on his mastery of any of the standard storytelling techniques but on his enthusiasm for hardware: he is the inventor of the "techno-thriller." Before Clancy, technology in spy thrillers usually took the form of doomsday machines and fantastic gadgets to whose mechanics (except for guns) the hero was indifferent. ("*Try* to pay attention, 007.") What Clancy discovered when he wrote "The Hunt for Red October" was that instead of writing "The submarine started to submerge" you could write

> The reactor coolant pumps went to fast speed. An increased amount of hot, pressurized water entered the exchanger, where its heat was transferred to the steam on the outside loop. When the coolant returned to the reactor it was cooler than it had been and therefore denser. Being denser, it trapped more neutrons in the reactor pile, increasing the ferocity of the fission reaction and giving off yet more power. Farther aft, saturated steam in the "outside" or nonradioactive loop of the heat exchange system emerged through clusters of control valves to strike the blades of the high-pressure turbine—

and people would line up to buy it.

The featured technological attraction in "The Sum of All Fears" is the nuclear bomb, of course. Many pages are devoted to its construction—there is a great deal of talk about tungsten-rhenium, beryllium, gallium-stabilized plutonium, and laser interferometry—and we are treated to a slow-motion account of what happens when such a bomb goes off:

> The plasma from the immolated straws pounded inward toward the second reservoir of lithium compounds. The dense uranium 238 fins just outside the Secondary pit also flashed to dense plasma, driving inward through the vacuum, then striking and compressing the tubular containment of more ^{238}U around the central container which held the largest quantity of lithium-deuteride/tritium. The forces were immense, and the structure was pounded with a degree of pressure greater than that of a healthy stellar core.

And so on. That we are to take all this seriously is made clear by an afterword in which the author explains that "certain technical details have been altered" in order to prevent readers from trying to build nuclear bombs in their basements.

It is certainly possible that my ignorance of how submarines run and why bombs explode is even more woeful than I suspect it is; but "The plasma from the immolated straws pounded inward toward the second reservoir of lithium compounds" is actually slightly less meaningful to me than "All mimsy were the borogoves." That Clancy's sentences about nuclear technology are grammatical is one positive indication that he actually understands what he is talking about, and is not simply paraphrasing some physics textbook; but it is the only indication I feel confident about. Millions of readers obviously feel differently, and either find these descriptions illuminating or don't care that they don't.

Whether fiction helps shape the world or only reflects it is a question that is usually answered according to one's taste for the particular fiction involved. But it is interesting that among Clancy's earliest admirers in the Reagan White House were Robert McFarlane, when he was the national-security adviser, and John Poindexter, who succeeded McFarlane at the National Security Council in 1985. For "The Hunt for Red October" reads today (subject matter aside) as obviously the novel of Iran-Contra. It is fairly radiant with the conviction, so central to the belief system that made the Iran-Contra affair possible, that the national security is much too important a matter to be left to those candy-colored clowns we call the Congress; and it makes the same adolescent identification between great heroism and great secrecy which is manifest in the symbol of Iran-Contra, Oliver North.

The recent war in the Persian Gulf is referred to several times in "The Sum of All Fears"; and that war, as it played on American television, was unmistakably a Tom Clancy war. The wizardly technology that turned battle into a game of reflexes, like Ping-Pong, and the astonishingly detailed intelligence, gathered by electronic-surveillance devices that seemed able to tell us everything there was to know about the enemy until our bombs struck, but had nothing to report about the aftermath—it was all a spectacle after Clancy's own imagination. And then, interviewed as they walked to and from their amazing airplanes, there were the warriors themselves—clean-cut, professional, apparently indestructible, and, ever so slightly, cynical.

—Louis Menand

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

A Foreign Woman, by Sergei Dovlatov, translated from the Russian by Antonina W. Bouis (Grove Weidenfeld; $17.95). In the last book by this delightful émigré writer, who died a year ago, we are invited to the corner of 108th Street and Sixty-fourth Drive in Queens, where Russian and Yiddish are spoken, Judaism is the predominant religion, and everyone knows every one else's business. Among the local favorites we find a familiar writer and family man by the name of Dovlatov; Karavayev, a human-rights activist turned drunkard; Zaretsky, the author of "Sex Under Totalitarianism"; and Marusya Tatarovich, a divorcée and former member of the élite nomenklatura, who made a marriage of convenience to a Jewish ex-boyfriend in order to get out of Russia. All 108th Street is astir with gossip about Marusya's current love affair, with a Latin American named Rafael, who gave her a cursing parrot for her birthday, and who has his own set of keys to the small flat she shares with her son. Zaretsky complains to Dovlatov that Marusya enjoys a life of passion and feeds sardines to her lousy parrot while people are dying in Afghanistan and starving in Nepal. "Where's the justice?" he gripes. Dovlatov, ever the sage, replies, "There are things more important than justice."

Force of Gravity, by R. S. Jones (Viking; $19.95). Emmet still wonders why his mother tapped at his hotel window to wake him before jumping off the ledge to her death. To guarantee a witness? To set him an example? But he knows that he was different from other people long before that; his story is less about going crazy than about *being* crazy. When this novel begins, however, Emmet has become just a little too crazy to get by. He marks local crimes with different-colored pins on a big city map in his bedroom. He eats only carrots, so he is slowly turning orange and shrinking away inside his clothes. He records all his phone conversations, fabricates preposterous lies for his therapist, and speaks in a foreign accent to shopkeepers in order to seem helpless and innocent of blame. Afraid of everyone, Emmet only wants to be left alone, but he draws attention to himself with every breath. Yet our own entry into the harrowing, funny world of this melancholy pariah is surprisingly easy. In fact, our pleasurable intimacy with Emmet becomes almost unsettling—it feels unearned, like the sanity we take for granted.

The Diamond Lane, by Karen Karbo (Putnam; $21.95). This novel is about the confusions that ensue when real life becomes the stuff of art, or, even more confusing, of sham art. It is also about Hollywood script-

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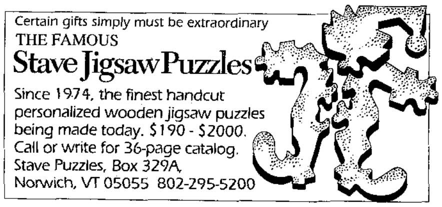

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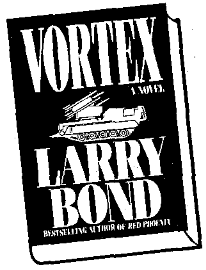

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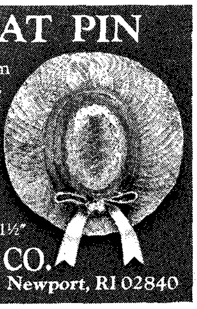

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writing, sibling rivalry, and culture clash—enough themes to stock several books. When Mouse FitzHenry is summoned back to L.A. from Africa, where, with her longtime beau, she has been working on a documentary about tribal wedding customs, she finds things much as she left them sixteen years before: her sister, Mimi (read "Me! Me!"), is as self-centered as ever, and the man Mimi stole from her is as desirable—sort of. What follows is a roundelay of loves in which one of the love objects is movies: documentaries in the case of Mouse and her long-ago ex, commercial features in the case of everyone else. From the message that Mouse received in Zaire ("Mowz FitHenry fone home"), and its garbled reply, to what anyone's real feelings are about anyone else, it's as if the characters were all involved in an elaborate game of telephone. It is a testament to Ms. Karbo's skill at high comedy that the ending of this book—a funeral rather than a wedding—leaves you smiling.

GENERAL

THE ADVENTURES OF AMOS 'N' ANDY: A SOCIAL HISTORY OF AN AMERICAN PHENOMENON, by Melvin Patrick Ely (Free Press; $22.95). In 1926, two white performers, Freeman Gosden and Charles Correll, took a hint from a radio executive: the new medium needed an equivalent of the newspaper comic strip. Gosden and Correll, who had met as employees of a firm that organized minstrel shows (and Mr. Ely, with grace and concision, folds in the history of minstrel performance), thought of telling a radio story about the adventures of two Southern black farm workers who migrate to a Northern city. Hardworking Amos and goldbrick Andy, disparate buddies, were nearly universal characters. The show treated blacks with more perceptiveness than whites usually demonstrated, but it also, if unwittingly, often demeaned them. "Amos 'n' Andy" was an instant success, and went on to become both a national institution and a subject of racial controversy; Mr. Ely's sensitive and scholarly work shows us why.

REMEMBERING HEAVEN'S FACE: A MORAL WITNESS IN VIETNAM, by John Balaban (Poseidon; $21.95). The recollections of a conscientious objector's alternative service. Mr. Balaban first worked for the International Voluntary Services, which in 1967 assigned him to Can Tho to teach linguistics. The Tet fighting destroyed the university buildings, and Mr. Balaban became a field representative for the Committee of Responsibility, which brought war-injured Vietnamese children to hospitals in the United States for long-term care and rehabilitation. In both jobs, Mr. Balaban saw a lot of the war, which he loathed, and a lot of the country, which he liked. He revisited Vietnam twice—in 1971, and in 1989, when he saw some of the children, now adults, whom COR had helped. Despite the book's political implications and its reports of atrocities and suffering, it isn't political or military—or even militant—and the writing is unforgettably lyrical.

TURKISH REFLECTIONS: A BIOGRAPHY OF A PLACE, by Mary Lee Settle (Prentice Hall; $19.95). In 1972, the author found in the Turkish city of Bodrum—the ancient Halicarnassus—a cheap and agreeable refuge in which to write a book. She fell in love with the place and its people, and stayed on for three years. Fifteen years later, she went back to Turkey, with the idea of exploring the entire country, from the coastal towns of the Aegean to the highlands of Anatolia. This account of her journey, which embraces an eight-thousand-year-old civilization, and the palaces, mosques, monuments, and other noble remains of its past, is enlightened by the author's familiarity with history and archeology. She has a strong feeling for place and a fresh eye for what goes on in the street, and she succeeds in conveying, through examples, the warmth and honesty of the Turks she met. She is at pains to correct, by means of this quite wonderful book, what she calls the public image of Turkey—"the worst and most ill-drawn" of any country's.

•

CBS News has settled on Saturday, Dec. 7, as the air date for its two-hour special marking the anniversary of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor 50 years ago. —*Kansas City Star.*

Good thinking, CBS.

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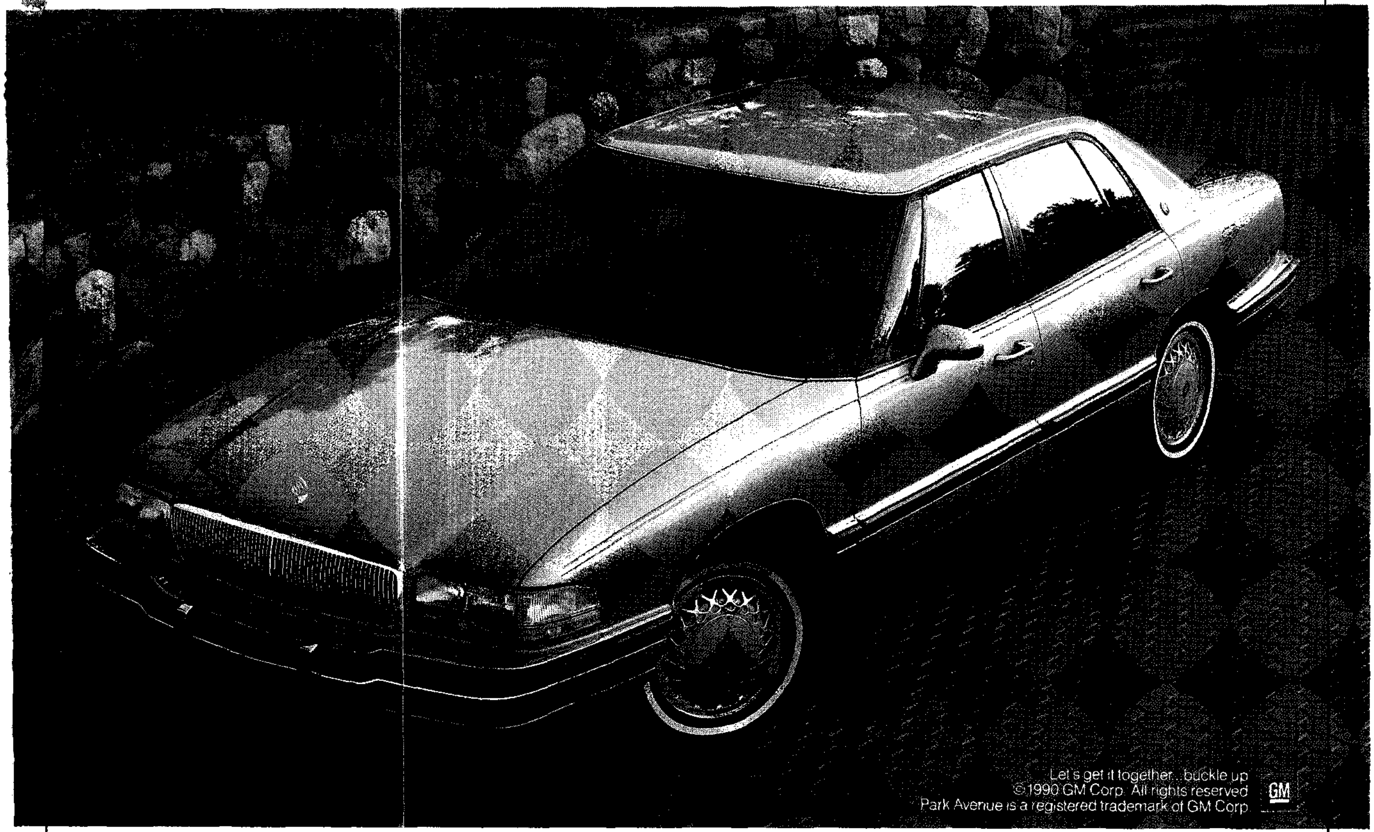
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Denys Cowan

HOME:
New York, N.Y. "Unlike most people here, I've lived in Gotham City all my life."

AGE: *31.*

PROFESSION:
Graphic/comic book artist, DC Comics.

HOBBY:
"I have more fun than anyone has a right to. A hobby would just be rubbing it in."

LAST BOOK READ:
Robert Graves, The Greek Myths. "They were the original super-heroes."

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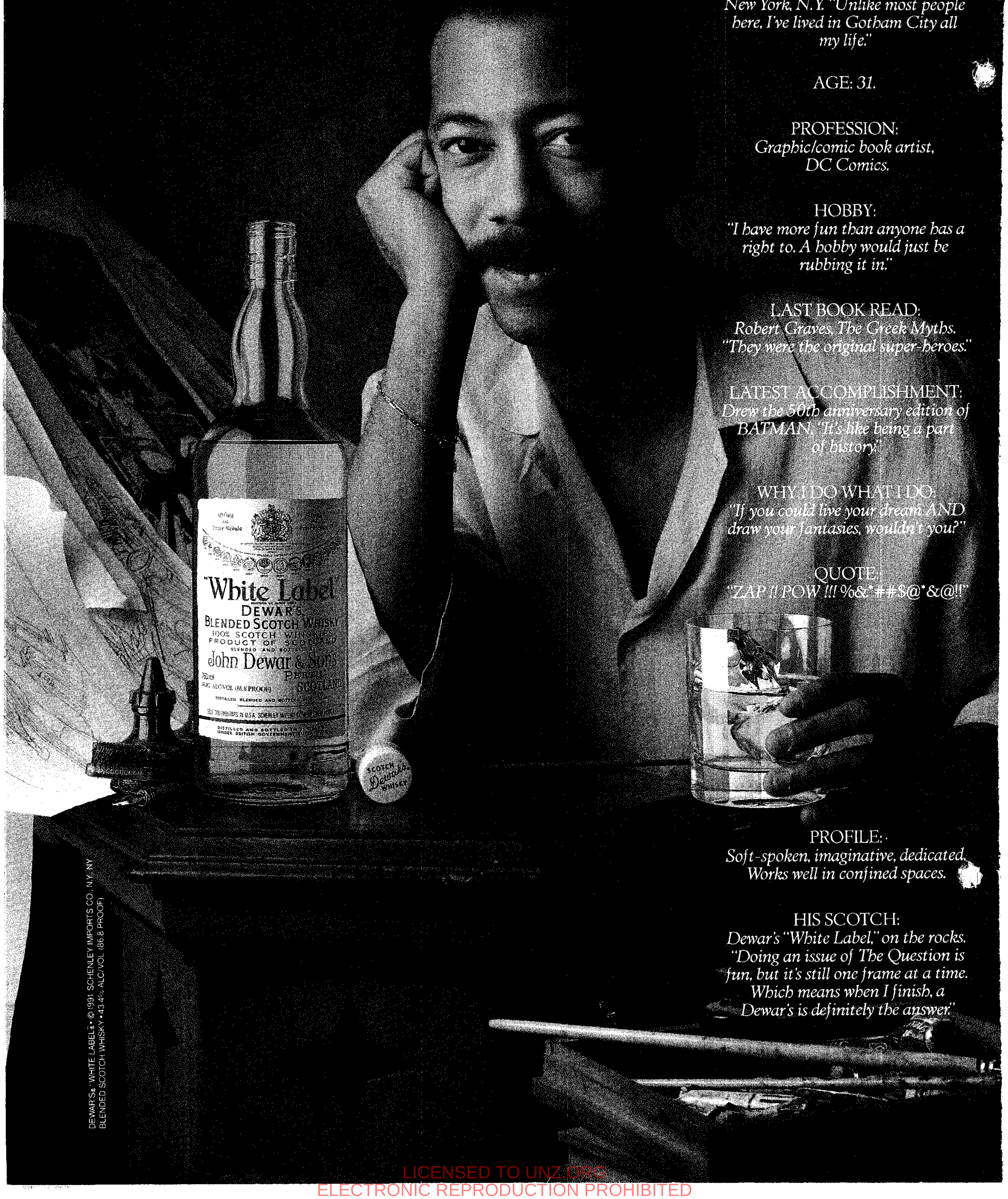
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